

Emergency preparedness and response handbook

Saving lives and protecting rights

Annex 2 : standard operating procedures in red and orange alert emergencies

Purpose:

This standard operating procedure guideline outlines the expected organisational response in the event orange or red alert emergencies and is guided by the Policy on responding to emergencies in local and national rights programmes (revised March 2013). Its purpose is to guide ActionAid leadership at International and country levels on steps to be followed in initiating and co-ordinating implementation of **RED** or **ORANGE** alert emergencies.

What is an **ORANGE** or **RED** alert emergency?

Red and orange alerts are the highest ActionAid emergency levels, meaning the disaster must be treated as an agency-wide priority. These levels of emergencies are likely to result in mass mortality, destruction and suffering. They will have an impact on the functioning of a country including the politics, infrastructure, types of aid and fundamentally the rights and opportunities for disaster-affected communities.

ORANGE

- 20,000 – 50,000 people affected nationally including communities that ActionAid works with
- some global or regional media interest
- declaration of national emergency by government OR
- IHART and/or government, or other humanitarian actors define the situation as significant

PLUS in addition to the above criteria, IHART assess that the capacity of the member/country programme to respond effectively is overwhelmed.

National:

- emergency response starts in affected member/country programme by country team
- situation reports updated daily or weekly

International:

- alert level declared by Director of Country Co-ordination on recommendation of Head of IHART
- IHART co-ordinates international support from the federation
- Oversight Group appointed by Director of Country Co-ordination and meets regularly as per the ToRs, with a focus on strategic and not just operational issues (see below)
- EFAST mobilised by IHART in consultation with the country
- DPRF funds released if proposal is approved
- IHART International Programme Manager deployed if assessed by IHART to be necessary
- VHDUs and other affiliates who have fundraising capacity fundraise through institutional donors and major donors.

RED

- over 50,000 people affected nationally including communities ActionAid works with AND
- significant global media interest OR
- declaration of national emergency by government OR
- IHART and/or government, or other humanitarian actors define the situation as critical

PLUS in addition to the above criteria, IHART assess that the capacity of the member/country programme to respond effectively is overwhelmed.

National:

- emergency response starts in affected member/country programme by country team
- situation reports updated daily or weekly

International:

- alert level declared by Chief Executive Officer on recommendation of Head of IHART in consultation with Director of Country Co-ordination.
- crisis becomes top priority for all units and constituents of the federation
- IHART co-ordinates international part of the federation
- Oversight Group appointed by Chief Executive and meets regularly as per ToRs, with a focus on strategic issues, as well as operational effectiveness of the response.
- IHART mobilises EFAST in consultation with country programme
- IHART International Programme Manager deployed
- DPRF funds released if proposal is approved
- VHDUs and other affiliates who have fundraising capacity fundraise.

Guiding principles:

The overarching principles of this guideline are:

1. Responses must enable communities to assert their rights in line with the HRBA approach.
2. We take sides with people living in poverty and affected by the disaster.
3. Promotion of women's leadership and women-led responses must be a central focus of both immediate response and integration into long-term programming.
4. Immediate responses must reach affected rights holders with whom ActionAid is already working, as a minimum.
5. All actions will be fully transparent and accountable to disaster-affected communities.
6. Responses will be operationalised in co-ordination with other actors, including partners, based on complementary skill sets, shared perspectives and strategic advantage.
7. Overall accountability for the emergency response remains with responding country management.
8. International Humanitarian Action and Resilience Team becomes accountable for and provides overall leadership for international co-ordination.
9. Emergency response takes precedence over all other organisational requirements which may hinder rapid response. This would require rescheduling of other activities and deadlines.

What is the first thing to happen?

When an emergency happens (whether a sudden onset or recognition that a slow onset is spiking) a teleconference will take place between the respective Country Director/Head of Country Co-ordination (latter in the case of multi-country disaster); International Programme Manager in IHART and the Head of IHART. Any of these three individuals will request a teleconference (refer to **Annex 1** for agenda/information required) and based on a situation update (verbal or written) from the Country Director a decision is taken to recommend the alert level. If the recommendation is red alert, the Head of IHART will recommend this to the Chief Executive, who takes a final decision and triggers the implementation of this guideline. If the recommendation is orange alert, the Head of IHART will recommend this to the Director of Country Co-ordination who will trigger implementation of this guideline.

What happens next?

The following activities need to happen within **48 hours** of the disaster and concurrently (not in sequence):

1. Initiation of the response to affected populations based on preparedness plans and rapid assessments – led by the Country Director (national perspective)/Head of Country Co-ordination (latter in the case of multi-country disaster) and International Programme Manager (international perspective and technical expertise).
2. Assessment of staff security and impact on staff will be part of the rapid assessment and appropriate measures taken to ensure staff security during emergencies as per the Global Staff Security Policy.
3. Country Director/Head of Country Co-ordination (latter in the case of multi-country disaster) requests funds from Disaster Preparedness and Response Fund (DPRF) that is activated by IHART. A decision is made within 24 hours by IHART, and shared with the country.
4. Co-ordinated by the International Communications Team (or nominated lead country for communications in emergencies), a holding statement is written, signed off, sent to press, placed on websites, sent to ActionAid's communications network and disseminated via social media, within one hour of the start of the emergency. The statement should be based on information from the Country Director, pre-existing country data and reputable news sources.
5. IHART's International Programme Manager, Information Officer, and Head of IHART are available 24 hours a day at the onset of a declared emergency to provide support.
6. The IPM will be deployed as decided by the Head of IHART to the responding country within 48 hours in both red and orange emergencies. The IPM has joint line management and accountability to the Country Director (or country emergency coordinator) and Head of IHART (see the TOR in **Annex 2**).
7. Within four hours of the initial teleconference (as above) the Oversight Group convenes, takes relevant decisions and triggers the following as agreed in the meeting:
 - Programme response – top line activities agreed based on information from Country Director.
 - Fundraising and Communications Director triggers fundraising activity as outlined in the alert level categories (institutional donors and major donors fundraising in the case of an orange alert; institutional donors, major donors and public appeal in the case of a red alert). The IHART Team Business Manager is the link person from IHART with the fundraising team on emergencies.
 - Fundraising and Communications Director triggers communications activities which is subsequently coordinated by the Head of Communications working closely with IHART.
 - Director of Programmes triggers international programme support/ response with direct technical support co-ordinated by International Programme Manager in IHART.

- Director of Programmes triggers policy; campaigns support/response. Policy response includes immediate analysis of national and international policies and set up of an international system to link policy appropriately at different levels – coordinated by IHART in consultation with Country Director.
 - Head of Country Co-ordination gives direct support to Country Director and ensures business as usual activities are suspended or put on hold to rally staff in supporting the response.
 - In extreme cases where the country leadership team have been personally affected and unable to lead on the response and other programme work, the Chief Executive may invoke the 'step-aside' provision in the Policy on responding to emergencies in local and national rights programmes by appointing a senior member of the IHART team to lead the response and manage the programme. In the case of members, this will be done in consultation with the National Board.
8. **Within 24–48 hours** IHART supports the responding country to put in place a management structure, and agrees the capacity gaps for filling within the next 24 hours for IHART to deploy EFAST as appropriate.
 9. Country programme produces daily situation reports and immediate response plan that are shared with IHART which IHART circulates to the wider federation.
 10. The Chair of the Oversight Group reports to the CEO or Director of Country Coordination on a daily basis during the emergency (see TOR for Oversight Group). Once a month, the Chair of the Oversight Group submits a report to SLT and the CEO, through the relevant member of SLT.
- Information and decisions required for initial teleconference**
1. **Information shared:** scale and location of disaster; type of disaster; likely impact of disaster; immediate safety/security concerns of staff/partners; immediate capacity gaps identified.
 2. **Guidance shared:** links with Security Adviser if not already happened and if necessary; immediate steps to take in country programme; suggestions for capacity requirements judged by scale of disaster; how to access further information, advice on what will be expected from the country programme during the course of the emergency (e.g. putting other work on hold).
 3. **Information:** key contacts in country programme shared, specifically information/communication contact for first few days.
 4. **Decision:** decision on alert level recommendation taken and communicated appropriately, including decision on leadership of the response and management of the country programme.

Terms of Reference for Emergency Oversight Group

This generic TOR is written on the understanding that it should be adapted to specific disasters with the agreement of the key Oversight Group (OG) members. In the case of red alert emergencies, this team is brought together by the Chief Executive. For orange alert emergencies, the OG will be called by the Director for Country Co-ordination. At the first meeting the scope, membership and timeframe for the OG will be agreed.

1. Purpose of the Oversight Group

The Oversight Group is set up to:

- provide oversight on organisational risk management (includes reputational, financial, and staff security risks).
- be accountable for the co-ordinated support of the ActionAid federation (VHDUs, MHDUs and functions within the International Secretariat) to the countries implementing emergency response

- approve the emergency response programme framework (it includes scale of response, programme, policy research, fundraising, communications, financial management). This is NOT to replace the line management but to ensure effective collaborative efforts and synergies
- be accountable for ensuring linkages to longer term development programmes.

2. Team members and roles:

a. Chair: Head of IHART (or International Programme Manager if Head of IHART is not available)

The chair convenes and manages meetings, and ensures actions are carried out and communicated appropriately. The Chair is accountable to the Chief Executive and Director of Country Co-ordination, based on alert levels.

b. Head of Country Co-ordination:

to support and ensure organisational compliance and to offer appropriate support from cluster level to the affected country.

c. Country Director/s: to lead emergency programme implementation and management; to link emergency response framework to longer term programming; to update the OG members and take forward decisions.

d. Programmes Director: to advise on policy and campaign opportunities, links and risks. To leverage additional policy/campaign support as necessary (can be invited into the coordination team as and when required).

e. International Fundraising and Communications Director:

- To advise on fundraising opportunities; links and risks.
- To mandate VHDUs to fundraise for a disaster if agreed and to monitor compliance and effectiveness.

¹ This ToRs were approved by SLT in November 2011 but have been revised to align to new structure and incorporate recommendations at the Feb 2013 IS leadership meeting.

- To advise on communications opportunities (for awareness raising; building profile; fundraising; influencing; campaigning), links and risks. To leverage additional communications support as necessary (particularly in the first two weeks of the emergency).
- To mandate VHDUs to undertake communications work if agreed.

f. International Director of

Operations: to advise on financial risks and risk management.

g. International Programme

Manager – IHART: to provide technical advice and implement decisions made.

h. IHART Senior Staff (not core members – but can be invited as required):

to provide appropriate technical advice and perspective; to take forward decisions taken; to report on progress from an international perspective; to update risks and opportunities for strengthening the response (e.g. policy; funding; programme; communications); to activate EFAST members as required by the implementing countries.

Note: *Relevant SLT members are expected to attend the first OG meeting for any disaster. After this they can delegate representation either on a permanent or ad-hoc basis to relevant persons in their team to deliver against the responsibilities as outlined in the TOR.*

3. Scope of the role of Emergency Oversight Group:

- Oversight Groups are accountable to SLT through the Director of Country Co-ordination, who will report to SLT regularly.
- Based on updates on the progress of overall programme, policy, communications and fundraising work vis-à-vis agreed plans, provide guidance to overcome challenges, if any, and manage the international risks of the response.
- To facilitate cross-functional linkages within the International Secretariat and demonstrate servant-leadership in working with the countries on emergency response.

- To inform and update the OG of the global opportunities and challenges that might impact on ActionAid's response and recommend appropriate action.
- To approve the overall policies, plans and budget for the affected country/ countries Emergency Response Programme or any significant amendment therein.

4. Frequency of the meetings:

- Meetings are daily for the first 15 days.
- After the first 15 days, it will be once a week for 3 months.
- After the first 3 months, it will be once a month until one year after the commencement of the disaster response.

Terms of Reference for IPM on deployment in emergencies

Note the below is a broad guideline and will be adapted to the local context for each specific emergency.

Terms of Reference: Interim Emergency Response Programme Manager

Reports To: Country Director

Accountable To: Head of IHART

Key functional contacts: National emergency response programme staff; IHART Team Business Manager; IHART Information Officer, IHART Systems & Surge Capacity Officer

Duration: 1 month

Purpose of role: IHART's International Programme Managers will be deployed to any Country Programme within their region responding to an orange or red alert emergency. They will act as an interim ERP Manager to initiate, support and guide an emergency response programme.

Key responsibility areas:

1. To lead on the development of an Early Recovery Plan in line with policies and strategies of ActionAid, and emergencies response programme in collaboration with the country team

- work with country programme team to identify early recovery areas of work that require response
- develop a specific plan for livelihood recovery and reactivation of income opportunity of the affected community for the recovery period
- integrate the use of the Emergency Manual throughout the response plans
- work with the country programme to conduct early recovery assessment and participate in UN/government led national early recovery assessment.

2. To develop and establish a monitoring mechanisms and reporting system to share progress of activities in a timely, transparent and consolidated manner and identify gaps and propose alternatives

- assist the country programme team to update the early recovery and livelihood restoration plan as per situation and available funding
- work with the country programme for developing concept note and provide support to develop proposal on early recovery (especial focus on livelihood recovery)
- facilitate the set up of mechanisms for participatory planning for sustainable and community-based early recovery and livelihood restoration programme.

3. To initiate the process for developing a Comprehensive Resilience Plan and Budget

- work with country programme team to set up a workshop for the development of a three-year comprehensive resilience plan and budget
- share materials, tools and templates from previous Comprehensive Resilience Planning meetings with the team.

4. Establish and develop donor systems (with the International Partnership Development Team)

- participate in the Humanitarian Cluster meetings where cluster approach is established and assist the country programme focal person to liaise with clusters
- support country programmes to engage with donors local to international (support country programmes, comms and IPD).

5. To ensure that advocacy, disparities and cross-cutting issues [gender, women's rights, exclusion, environment, governance etc.] are taken into account in all policies, strategies and activities of country programme

- ensure that disparity and diversity issues are incorporated into all programmes (with a clear focus on women, men, girls and boys, persons with disabilities, excluded groups, the elderly, etc.)
- ensure that all planned activities are culturally sensitive and take into account the local context, and are in line with the Red Cross and NGO Code of Conduct, Sphere minimum standards (if applicable) and humanitarian principles
- follow the humanitarian principles, standards and guidelines that ActionAid is committed to, and ensure these are adhered to by ActionAid staff, partner staff, deployees and volunteers

- ensure that environmental and sustainability issues are considered
- ensure transparency and accountability tools, processes and mechanisms to rights holders are in place.

6. To mobilise, manage, inspire, and build the capacity of the country programme

- training of staff for the programme
- recruitment of staff for the programme
- guidance on staff and asset security.

7. Be an IHART contact point

- take part in regular Oversight Groups that will be coordinated by IHART
- make sure short stories/photos go to IHART's Information Officer.
- when completing an assignment this person will document lessons learnt and feed these into the ActionAid knowledge management system and IHART.