Section 4: disaster response in the first month

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Section 04

KEY POINTS

- **The member/country programme will be supported by the federation through IHART** to manage disaster response, information, fundraising, communications, management response and co-ordination.

- The **detailed needs assessment should be conducted from the perspective of people living in poverty and exclusion, particularly women affected by the disaster.** Women lead the process with analysis capturing the restoration and rehabilitation needs, linking to longer term change processes.
  - The detailed needs assessment requires planning and organising, forming an assessment team, conducting the assessment and community-led analysis and information sharing. This feeds into the **Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan (ERRP)**.

- The **Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan** guides the overall disaster response. The plan will cover the type of support and assistance to be provided; overall programme plan; scale of the programme; emergency response management structure; integrated communications plan; policy plan; co-ordination plan; accountability plan and fundraising plan.

- Member/country programme should continue to implement the disaster response.

- Key **management processes for implementation** include HR management; staff safety and security; financial management; contract management; logistics and administration plan and accountability measures.

- All of ActionAid's emergency response and resilience programmes will include an **M&E** plan. ActionAid's approach includes regular monitoring, a real time evaluation (RTE), final evaluation and an impact study.

- All ERRPs must develop a **risk matrix**, which should be updated regularly – the success of a response depends on how effectively we identify and manage risks.

- Member/country programme to develop a **fundraising plan** based on the ERRP and budget, prioritising potential donors, with support from IHART and International Fundraising. Submit proposals to institutional donors, trusts and foundations.

- Member/country programme to develop a **communications plan** to set out how ActionAid will communicate with external stakeholders as well as supporting policy work, fundraising, communicating with disaster-affected communities etc.

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Section 4: disaster response in the first month

Contact details – primary emergency focal points – IHART focal points

Name	Job description	Location	Phone	E-mail
Amar Nyak	International Programmes Manager, Asia	India	+91 965 0312 922	Amar.Nayak@actionaid.org
Bijay Kumar	Head of IHART	London, UK	+ 44 (0)20 3122 0721 +44 7 5959 63 801	Bijay.Kumar@actionaid.org
John Abuya	International Programmes Manager, Africa & Americas	Nairobi, Kenya	+254 20 4250 000 +254 721 734 040	John.Abuya@actionaid.org
Lois Appleby	Information Officer	London, UK	+44 (0)20 3122 0580 +44 7725 423355	Lois.Appleby@actionaid.org

Communications focal points

Name	Job description	Location	Phone	E-mail
Natalie Curtis	Journalist – Emergencies & Content | ActionAid UK	London, UK	+44 (0)203 122 0641	Natalie.Curtis@actionaid.org
Ryan Gawn	Head of International Communications	Johannesburg, South Africa	+27 11 7314519 +27 (0) 715 278 354	Ryan.Gawn@actionaid.org
Tricia O'Rourke	International Communications Media Manager	London, UK	+44 (0)203 122 0824 +44 (0)7850 312 438	Tricia.O'Rourke@actionaid.org

Security focal point

Name	Job description	Location	Phone	E-mail
Javeria Ayaz Malik	Global Security Advisor	Nairobi, Kenya	+44 7809 657 901 +254 731 000 022	javeria.malik@actionaid.org

About this section

This section describes the actions that should be taken in the first month after a disaster. It explains what the member/country programme should do, as well as the support that should be provided by other parts of the organisation. This section summarises the key information and actions that are required, and contains references to the annexes where relevant templates and detailed guidance on each activity can be found.
This section follows on from **Section 3**, which explains what should be done in the first 72 hours. Many of these activities will continue or overlap with activities in the first month. This section is designed as a practical guide for staff across the organisation who have a role in responding to disasters. It should ideally be read before an emergency, but can also be used as a resource to refer to during an emergency response.

Summary of key actions

The following table summarises the key actions that should be taken in the first month. A fuller description of each activity is included in the text below. The RASCI matrix at **http://goo.gl/asTkFk** sets out in detail the roles that individuals and departments across the organisation are expected to play, and where accountability lies for each activity.

Implementing disaster response

What the member/country programme does	What IHART does (YELLOW alerts)	What IHART does (ORANGE & RED alerts)	What other parts of the organisation do (ORANGE & RED alerts)
• conduct a detailed needs assessment	• deploy EFAST members	• review the needs assessment plan	
• complete an Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan (ERRP)		• review ERRP	
• continue implementing relief, guided by ERRP			

Information management

What the member/country programme does	What IHART does (YELLOW alerts)	What IHART does (ORANGE & RED alerts)	What other parts of the organisation do (ORANGE & RED alerts)
• continue to submit updated sitreps	• review and circulate updated sitreps	• review and circulate updated sitreps	

Management response

What the member/country programme does	What IHART does (YELLOW alerts)	What IHART does (ORANGE & RED alerts)	What other parts of the organisation do (ORANGE & RED alerts)
• implement key management processes			• Oversight Group approves ERRP
• develop a risk register			

Fundraising

What the member/country programme does	What IHART does (YELLOW alerts)	What IHART does (ORANGE & RED alerts)	What other parts of the organisation do (ORANGE & RED alerts)
• develop fundraising strategy as part of ERRP	• work with fundraising affiliates to explore opportunities for small-scale funding for response	• share fundraising gaps with federation and support funding proposals	• affiliates submit proposals to institutional donors, trusts, major donors
• submit proposals to in-country donors		• co-ordinate continuing fundraising efforts across the federation	
• apply for institutional donor funds as available			

Communications

What the member/country programme does	What IHART does (YELLOW alerts)	What IHART does (ORANGE & RED alerts)	What other parts of the organisation do (ORANGE & RED alerts)
• develop a communications plan as part of ERRP			
• establish activities to strengthen communication with disaster-affected communities			

Co-ordination

What the member/country programme does	What IHART does (YELLOW alerts)	What IHART does (ORANGE & RED alerts)	What other parts of the organisation do (ORANGE & RED alerts)
• continue to attend UN cluster meetings and share information		• link with relevant UN clusters at the global level	

Implementing disaster response

Conduct a detailed needs assessment

Who does this: member/country programme, with support from IHART

The purpose of a needs assessment is to gather detailed information about the disaster and the impact on the communities that ActionAid works with. The needs assessment is different to the rapid assessment conducted in the first 72 hours after the disaster. The needs assessment collects more detailed information on the impact of the disaster and the needs of the affected communities. This usually begins from week one of the crisis and should be completed four weeks after the crisis has begun. It will determine the scale and type of ActionAid's response to the disaster and will directly inform the Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan. The needs assessment is also essential for developing credible funding proposals to donors.

Whereas in the rapid assessment, where the emphasis was on providing 'just enough' information to inform the immediate response, in the needs assessment we can take a bit more time to gather more detailed information. It is advisable to consult other agencies about joining any potential joint needs assessments.

The specific purposes of a needs assessment are:

- to identify the material and non-material requirements of the disaster-affected communities that need to be met as a priority
- to gather more accurate and detailed information and data to inform the emergency response and resilience programme
- to clarify problems and identify solutions with the community
- to use community-led processes as a methodology to build the capacity of the people ActionAid works with to actively engage in their own recovery
- to support the design of policy messaging and action
- to help identify the underlying causes of vulnerability
- to inform donors and other partners on key needs of the people ActionAid works with
- to build relationships with communities affected by disaster
- to provide a baseline that allows us to assess the success of the emergency response.

There is debate in the sector about what the purpose and focus of a needs assessment should be: normative needs (those defined by agreed international standards, e.g. if a community requires water the needs are determined according to technical standards on water quality and quantity), perceived needs (the subjective needs identified by the community or other stakeholders), expressed needs (those needs which the community publicly share with people conducting the needs assessments), or relative needs (the needs of certain groups who may be worse off compared to others). ActionAid is clear that our needs assessment is biased towards capturing the needs and voices of people living in poverty and exclusion and affected by disasters. At the same time it is important to triangulate or cross reference information gathered through a community-based process to get as accurate a picture as possible. This may be through consulting different groups or individuals separately to give people a chance to share things in a forum where they are comfortable to share openly, using different methods to ask the same questions to assess whether the information you are being given is consistent, sharing information on normative standards (e.g. water quality, nutrition) so that people have access to information to help them make informed decisions about what they need.

When should the needs assessment be done?

The needs assessment should start within one week of the disaster and should be completed within one month. It builds upon the findings of the rapid assessment.
Needs assessment is an on-going process – it does not end after a month, but instead should be updated regularly as the disaster progresses.

Updates should be communicated both within the country programme and to IHART (see contact details **Annex 4**).
It may also be necessary to update the needs assessment for specific donor proposals.

Who should do the needs assessment?

The Emergency Response Manager is responsible for conducting the needs assessment and sharing the findings. He or she will need to put together a team of ActionAid staff and/or partners to implement the needs assessment. It is important that all members of the needs assessment team have a clear understanding of the purpose and methodology of the assessment, and are following the same process in each geographical area. The team should be gender and culturally balanced.

As with the rapid assessment, it is important that the community is involved in designing and carrying out the needs assessment. For example, ActionAid can work with community institutions such as *Reflect* circles, STAR circles, women's groups and relief committees.

ActionAid should also work together with other actors where possible to avoid duplication and to maximise the information that is generated on the impact of the crisis. It is also likely that communities will be suffering from 'assessment fatigue' if they have been asked to participate in several assessments conducted by numerous agencies. If the UN clusters are activated, ActionAid should share needs assessment data with other cluster members, and participate in joint assessments where possible. The response team need to be mindful of how the results of our needs assessment feed into other mechanisms that can assist in fundraising.

What information should be gathered in the needs assessment?

The needs assessment needs to provide the information necessary to design an effective emergency response, and also to inform longer term recovery and rehabilitation. Key questions include:

- ❑ How many people have been affected? In what ways are they affected (killed, injured, houses damaged, houses destroyed, crops destroyed, children dropping out of school etc)? Remember, it is critical that the needs assessment provides reliable data – in order to develop a good Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan and credible fundraising proposals, we need to know numbers – how many people are affected, how much prices have risen, how many people have migrated etc.
- ❑ What has the impact on livelihoods been?
- ❑ What has been the specific impact on women?
- ❑ What does the community identify as the underlying causes of the disaster?
- ❑ What does the community identify as the priorities for response and recovery?
- ❑ What is the community already doing and what support do they require?
- ❑ What are the gaps in response provided by other actors (government, other NGOs, UN etc).
- ❑ When do people need assistance and how long are they likely to need assistance for (for example, consider seasons where food insecurity is common, and the livelihood calendar of different communities).
- ❑ What are the information gaps and what are the best ways to ensure effective two-way communication with communities?

The headings in the needs assessment checklist currently are:

- overview of the situation
- numbers of people affected and extent of damage
- sector specific information: women's rights, psychosocial, food security, livelihoods, education, housing/shelter, non-food items (NFIs), water sanitation and hygiene
- information
- resilience building
- existing policies and schemes
- capacity-building.

Remember that the assessment is not just about material needs – do not forget policy aspects, social, environmental and staff security issues etc.

Methodologies for the assessment

- remember that much of the ground work in terms of baseline data for both a rapid assessment and detailed needs assessment should have been covered in the affected country programme's preparedness plans
- conclusions should be drawn from a range of primary and secondary data sources.

The checklist at **http://goo.gl/asTkFk** sets out detailed questions to be asked, including specific questions for different types of disasters. Assessment tools and training materials can be found here: **http://www.ecbproject.org/efsl-48-hour-assessment-tool--training/efsl-48-hour-assessment-tool--training**

See **Section 3** for information on rapid needs assessments.

How should the information be gathered?

Secondary data

The needs assessment can draw on secondary data, from ActionAid and from external sources. As for the rapid assessment, ActionAid's country level preparedness plan can provide useful social, geographic and economic data on the areas affected. Needs assessments produced by the government or other NGOs, UN OCHA situation reports and information updates from UN clusters can also be used. These can provide important information about the national or regional situation, which can supplement and contextualise data from ActionAid's working areas. Some donors, such as ECHO, require technical data that ActionAid may struggle to provide. For example, in food crises, ECHO base their funding decisions in part on global acute malnutrition (GAM) and severe malnutrition (SAM) rates, which require technical measurements. ActionAid often relies on assessments done by government or other humanitarian agencies.

Remember that secondary data can be useful for backing up assumptions prior to carrying out an assessment and supplementing findings once the assessment has been undertaken, but there are limitations. Data from secondary sources should be cross-referenced and triangulated to give as clear a picture as possible.

For orange and red alert disasters, IHART's Information Officer (see contact details **Annex 4**) will also support the member/country programme to identify and analyse secondary data at the global level.

Primary data

The needs assessment should include information gathered **directly from the community.** As time will be limited, you should consider selecting a representative sample of communities from the affected area. When selecting villages, consider the following factors to ensure you have a representative sample: **different ethnic communities, distance from the road/towns, language** etc. For reasons of practicality you may have to select based on accessibility (for example it may be impossible to reach certain areas due to flooding or conflict). The needs assessment should make clear how the sample was selected. Assessments should be designed to gather and present information about the **diversity of needs of the most vulnerable people** e.g. women, children, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, IDPs, politically or socially excluded groups etc. Consider how **power relations** in the communities may affect the findings, and identify ways that this can be addressed in the assessment design (e.g. will certain groups be reluctant to participate, or to share some information?).

ActionAid staff and partners should use **participatory methods to ensure that the affected community is involved right from the start** in identifying priorities and deciding on the response needed. Examples of tools include: household surveys, focus group discussions, social maps. **Annex 8** sets out suggested methods that can be used to gather different types of information. All assessment questions must be sensitive to local custom and culture, and take into account the fact that people affected by disasters may be suffering from emotional distress. Assessment questions should be reviewed by women leaders in the affected communities.

Photos can be useful resources – photos of affected crops, damage to houses, children suffering malnutrition. Remember that you should always ask permission before taking photos of people and explain clearly how their photo will be used. It can be particularly effective to have 'before and after' pictures – think about including photos of the 'normal' situation as part of the preparedness plan process. Photos of the same places after emergencies can then
be taken as part of the needs assessment process.

In orange and red alert disasters, IHART will be available to support the member/country programme to conduct the needs assessment. The International Programme Manager deployed to the crisis will support in at least the design stage of the needs assessment, and IHART staff will be available to review and advise on the needs assessment remotely.

How should the information be shared?

The data and conclusions of the needs assessment should first be shared with the affected community. Before leaving each community, the team should feedback to community members (particularly women) how they have understood the situation and what they understand as the needs and priorities of the community. They should also explain what will happen next – how the information will be used, when ActionAid will return and what the community can expect. It is important to be careful about managing expectations and not promising things that ActionAid cannot deliver. The team should emphasise that ActionAid will work with the community to respond to the disaster, and will support the community to be the primary responders.

Data from the field visits should be analysed to draw detailed conclusions and present the data effectively. The results of the needs assessment must also be sent as quickly as possible to IHART, who will share this information across the federation. See **http://goo.gl/asTkFk** for a needs assessment template. This is designed so that the information is easy to use for the different end-users (country programme staff responsible for designing the response, fundraisers, communications staff, IHART etc).

The following flow chart summarises the key steps in developing the needs assessment.

Planning and organising
- Consider what information is already available (from the rapid assessment, preparedness plan, secondary data etc) and identify what else is required.
- Check if other agencies are undertaking similar assessments and explore possibilities for collaboration.
- Review budget and resources (people, equipment, transport etc) available for the needs asseessment.
- Consider safety and security issues involved in the field work, and link with ActionAid's Global Security Co-ordinator if necessary.
- Develop a plan for the needs assessment (objectives, methodology, sample) and share with IHART for feedback. This should be done within one week of the start of the disaster.

Forming the needs assessment team
- Emergency Response Manager takes responsibility for putting together the needs assessment team.
- Ensure the team includes women, and people knowledgeable about women's rights.
- Ensure the team has appropriate language skills, including local languages.
- Provide briefings/training to ensure all team members are clear about the purpose and methodology (don't forget to include safety and security issues).
- Identify appropriate community institutions that can be involved in the needs assessment process and ensure they are adequately briefed.
- Collect secondary data.

Conducting the needs assessment
- Ensure that questions and approaches are reviewed by community members, including women.
- Ensure that participatory approaches are used.
- Feed back the main findings and conclusions to the community before leaving, and explain the next steps in the process.
- Leave originals of resources developed through participatory approaches (e.g. social maps) and take photos or copies for ActionAid's records.

Analysing and sharing the information
- Analyse the data from the field visits, using the data input spreadsheets provided.
- Write up the needs assessment using the template provided and send to IHART within one month of the start of the disaster.
- Remember to include sources for secondary data used, and include the original data from the field work (e.g. photos of social maps, lists of people involved in focus group discussions etc).

Develop an Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan (ERRP)

Who does this: member/country programme, with support from IHART and Oversight Group
The Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan is a document that guides the overall disaster response. The Emergency Response Manager is responsible for developing the ERRP, in collaboration with the Emergency Response Team and other members of the country programme.
For **ORANGE** and **RED** alert level disasters, it must be completed within one month and sent to IHART. The plan must then be approved and signed off by the Oversight Group. In **YELLOW** alert disasters, the member/country programme in the affected country can decide whether a formal ERRP is required.
A template for the ERRP is included in **Annex 9**. The plan should cover the following:

- Decision on the type of support and assistance to be provided based on rapid and needs assessments. This should include the longer term activities as well as the immediate relief activities that will already be underway in the first month of the response.
- Overall programme plan that includes: objectives, sectoral focus areas, population and geographical coverage, overall funding needs, and staff and logistic requirements.
- Scale of the programme. Although ActionAid will seek to increase its funding base to achieve maximum impact, the size and pace of its operation will also be determined by the capacity of the country programme and its partners (including deployed capacity).
- An integrated communications plan (see below) – which will have the following strands: communicating with disaster-affected communities; internal communications; donor visibility requirements; and external communication to donors, media and public.
- Policy positions/statements and an integrated policy plan. Investigating and analysing policy issues arising from an emergency is an important part of the needs assessment. Disasters provide an opportunity to engage the communities we work with in shaping and changing policies in favour of people living in poverty and exclusion, and as such advocacy and campaign work must be included as a core component from the start of ActionAid's response. Adequate budget and staffing for policy work should be allocated in the programme plan. For more information on policy work in emergencies, see **Section 7** – policy.

- An agreed emergency response management structure, ensuring inclusion of core competencies and appropriate skills sets as per the humanitarian competencies framework (see **http://goo.gl/asTkFk**). Capacity-building plans should also be incorporated to ensure development of new and existing staff.
- A co-ordination plan to ensure appropriate links with local and national co-ordination mechanisms including the UN cluster system and government co-ordination mechanisms at local, regional and national levels. ActionAid is a member of the Global Early Recovery, Protection and Livelihoods clusters, although countries should plan to engage with other UN clusters as relevant, based on their strategic relevance to ActionAid's programme.
- The overall funding requirement and an integrated fundraising plan based on regularly updated donor scoping (see below).
- An accountability plan. The plan will outline the steps ActionAid will take to ensure our accountability to: rights holders affected by the emergency; our own internal stakeholders; the government of the disaster-affected country; local and international laws, standards and practices; and donors and supporters of our emergency response. More information on accountability in emergencies is provided in **Section 6**.

Continue implementing disaster response

Who does this: member/country programme, with support of IHART
The response activities should be guided by the results of the rapid assessment and should be carried out in parallel to the detailed needs assessment and the development of the Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan (ERRP). The focus in the first month should be on continuing to support immediate needs but also on preparing the ground for a longer term response. Again, the response will be context specific, but examples of activities that could be done in this phase include:

- Distribution of materials for reconstruction of houses (based on consultation with community and procured by community representatives). Refer to Sphere standards for technical specifications (e.g. shelter requirements per family size). **http://www.spherehandbook.org/en/contents-4/**
- Distribution of food items. If distributing food, refer to nutrition standards (see Sphere) and consider locally produced high nutrition products. Food procurement (especially from overseas) should be avoided. Where possible look for food from local markets and in the longer term look at promoting food production – see Livelihoods in **Section 7**.
- Distribution of non-food items (NFIs) such as hygiene kits, cooking utensils, clothes, lamps, blankets, treated mosquito nets, cooking stoves (consider safety and the local availability of fuel). Refer to Sphere standards for guidance on items, quantities and technical specifications that should be included.
- Distribution of books, school stationery and uniforms to help children get back into schools.
- Repair of water pumps, bore wells etc. to re-establish water supplies.
- Early livelihood recovery, such as distribution of seeds, farming tools etc.
- Psychosocial support such as organising recreational activities, training community volunteers.
- Establishing women's committees to identify protection concerns and disseminate information on protection services.
- Putting in place accountability mechanisms such as transparency boards, community procurement and distribution committees, complaint boxes etc.
- Sharing information with communities on services available (ActionAid programmes and also information on government support available and services provided by other agencies).

- Establish two-way communication channels with communities to share essential information, and ensure communities have a voice in the response process. This will depend on context but could include SMS projects, radio, community outreach volunteers, community drama, community review meetings etc. Lots of information on communicating with disaster-affected communities can be found on the Communicating with Disaster-Affected Communities (CDAC) website **http://www.cdacnetwork.org** or the Infoasaid archive **http://infoasaid.org**

See also Section 7 for more guidance on communicating with disaster-affected communities.

NFI

For distribution of NFIs, consider the following points:
- Give special consideration to health and hygiene items for women in particular, which are often missed in needs assessments (such as sanitary towels, underwear and condoms).
- If necessary provide guidance on how items are used (e.g. if distributing unfamiliar items such as solar lamps).
- Consider community safety and environmental sustainability (e.g. instead of oil or gas lamps which could be a fire hazard, could rechargeable solar lamps be used).
- Mobilising women's committees to plan and implement the distribution can be an effective way to integrate women's leadership from the start of the response.
- Involve the community in procurement (selecting samples and suppliers, comparing costs and quality of items, community representatives going to markets where possible).
- Ensure that finance and procurement guidelines are followed (e.g. obtaining three quotes – see Financial Management Framework (FMF) at **http://goo.gl/asTkFk** for more information).
- Ensure co-ordination with other agencies to avoid duplication and explore opportunities for joint distribution.

Cash programming can often be an effective alternative to direct distribution of food or NFI. It can be more empowering and dignified for communities, as it gives people more choice to buy the things they really need. It can also be quick to implement and cost efficient for the agency as you can avoid large-scale procurement and distribution of NFIs or food. Cash programming can be done in different ways: through unconditional cash transfers (money given directly to vulnerable families in the community, often through mobile phone transfer, which can be spent on anything the recipients prioritise), conditional cash transfers (money which is restricted to a certain purpose such as rent support or food, often provided in the form of vouchers), cash-for-work (cash given in return for work, which can be physical work such as reconstruction of local infrastructure, social work in the community such as caring for children or supporting elderly people) or cash for training. A combination of these options may be the most appropriate (e.g. cash-for-work for those able to work, and cash transfers for vulnerable families unable to work).

Cash programming is not appropriate in all contexts and should be carefully planned, taking into account the local situation. For example, key questions include:

- Will distribution of cash cause any security concerns or put recipients at risk?
- Is there a risk of distorting the local labour market, taking jobs away from people in the community (in which case are the other activities that can be considered in return for paid work) or undermining existing livelihoods?
- Is it legal for people to work and receive a wage? (This may be a particular issue in some refugee emergencies if the host government does not allow refugees or displaced people to work).
- Are local markets functioning – if people receive cash are the items they need available to buy in the markets? Are they available at prices people can afford with the cash provided?
- Does the cash programme risk pushing up prices in local markets?
- Who will make the decision in the family on how the money is spent, and is it likely to meet the priority needs of the family? (If this is a concern, vouchers can be considered instead).
- If considering cash programming, it is useful to include a market analysis in the needs assessment stage (looking at availability of food and goods in the market, prices and recent price rises, inflation rates etc). Guidance on market analysis tools can be found in the food security and nutrition section of the Sphere handbook **(http://www.spherehandbook.org/)** and **http://emma-toolkit.org/** There is also some useful guidance on ECHO requirements around market analysis for cash programmes: **http://ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/sectoral/cash_en.htm**

Ensure that any programmes are in line with financial regulations, and that accountability is prioritised so that communities are clear about the programme, who will benefit and how participants have been selected. Transparency boards are a good way to do this (see **Section 7** – Accountability), and records should be kept of receipts/signature sheets for people receiving cash. It is important to have community involvement (led by women) in defining the selection criteria, mapping the community to identify vulnerable families, monitoring distribution of cash and fulfilment of work requirements in cash-for-work programmes. The community should also define the type of work to be done, the number of hours of work required etc.

There are lots of resources and guidance available on cash programming: the Cash Learning Partnership is a good place to start, and contains links to other useful resources: **www.cashlearning.org** Refer also to Livelihoods Programming in **Section 7.**

Don't forget that immediate needs are not just food, shelter and NFIs. Policy work, psychosocial support, protection, sharing information and mobilising communities are all part of emergency response.

See **Section 7** for more guidance on how to approach these areas of programming.

FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

RASCI matrix: **http://goo.gl/asTKFk**
Needs assessment checklist and template: **http://goo.gl/asTKFk**
ERRP template: **Annex 9** and **http://goo.gl/asTKFk**
Humanitarian competencies framework: **http://goo.gl/asTKFk**
Financial Management Framework: **http://goo.gl/asTKFk**

http://www.spherehandbook.org/en/contents-4/
www.cashlearning.org
http://emma-toolkit.org/

Management response

Implement key management processes

Who does this: members/country programme
Human resource management

- HR is part of the programme and is included in the response plan. The HR plan should be developed based on prior analysis included in the HR section of the country level preparedness plan.
- Staff should be deployed or recruited to meet all requirements of the programme to enable an effective response – national EFAST and volunteers should be included as part of the structure (see **Section 2**)
- As a signatory to People in Aid, ActionAid will utilise the principles and guidelines outlined by People in Aid, specifically regarding fast-track recruitment, rest and recuperation, psychosocial support for staff and on-the-job coaching. Information on the People In Aid Principles can be found in **Section 7** – Accountability.
- ActionAid has worked with a group of different INGOs to develop a Humanitarian Core Competencies Framework, **(see http://goo.gl/asTkFk)**, which describes the important competencies and behaviours required by humanitarian workers. This should be used when developing job descriptions, interview questions and assessing job performance.

Staff safety and security

- Make sure a designated and trained security focal person is in place.
- Security risk analysis, security procedures and contingency plans are in place and updated as necessary.
- New risks are identified and staff engaged in emergency response are actively and effectively supported to manage and minimise the risks.
- Security orientations and inductions are organised for staff joining the response, EFAST deployments and other staff visiting the country to support the emergency response.
- Effective structures and capacities are in place to respond to critical security incidents during the course of emergency response.

Financial management

- An efficient finance system must be in place, capable of managing:
  - 1. contractual obligations;
  - 2. identifying and managing financial risk related to currency exchange, corruption and cash handling;
  - 3. cash flow to partners and procurement;
  - 4. accurate financial reporting and management accounts;
  - 5. plans for internal and external audits.
- Financial transactions and financial management processes will follow adequate internal controls in line with the Financial Management Framework. Emergency financial policies and procedures should only be applicable during the relief phase, and normal policy should resume once the relief phase of emergency is over. During an emergency, funds will be available to members/country programmes through DPRF upon request to IHART.
- A back-up plan, which could take the form of an in-country, finance staff emergency roster, should be considered.
- The programme will be consistent with the emergency section of ActionAid's international **Financial Management Framework.** The full document can be downloaded from the Hive at: **http://goo.gl/asTkFk**

For guidance on good practices in preventing corruption in humanitarian operations, guidance can be found here: **http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/handbook_of_good_practices_preventing_corruption_in_humanitarian_operations**

Contract management

- The responsible staff member in the country programme will prepare a schedule of donor reports and contractual obligations and ensure incorporation of these obligations in the programme implementation plan.
- The management structure will outline clear responsibilities for contract management and financial management of fundraised income and fundraising.

Logistics and administration plan

Logistics and administration will be an integral part of the programme plan and should consider the following priorities:

1. supporting movement of staff and partners
2. managing procurement, storage and supplies
3. setting up and maintaining communication equipment and IT
4. management of vehicles and transportation
5. setting up and maintaining offices
6. handling of cash and banking: (possible risk issues: volume of transaction, handling of cash in danger prone areas, no/limited banking facilities, difficulties in opening bank accounts).

Annex 10 contains a checklist of key actions under each of these headings.

Key principles to consider include:

- Participation of and accountability to disaster-affected communities, for example community participation in procurement decisions, and scrutiny of suppliers and costs.
- Be aware of donor requirements for procurement that must be followed.
- Consider international standards, which define the necessary quality of humanitarian goods and services. For example, ISO standards or the WHO prequalification programme for supplies of drugs for malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS.
- Prices in emergencies often increase dramatically and this must be considered when putting together budgets.
- Preparedness is key – identify, screen and build relationships with suppliers in advance, and make sure there is clarity on the ActionAid processes and systems that apply in emergencies (for example, some financial processes are altered to allow greater flexibility).
- Procurement of goods and services should be done as locally as possible, to ensure appropriateness of goods, reduce transport costs and support the local economy of a disaster-affected community. Where goods or services are not available locally, or are of insufficient quality, identify alternatives within the country or regionally. Only in exceptional circumstances should procurement be done at the global level – for example if specialised equipment or supplies are needed that are not available locally.

The UN global logistics cluster provides lots of resources on logistics in emergencies, including a logistics operational guide: **http://log.logcluster.org**

Develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan

Who does this: member/country programme

All ActionAid's emergency response and resilience programmes will include an M&E plan to:

1. Ensure ActionAid demonstrates its accountability and monitors compliance and standards. There is a range of international standards (including Sphere) that define required quality and timeliness in emergency response, and detailed technical standards in different sectors (see **Section 7** – Accountability).
2. Maintain flexibility to keep country strategy papers and annual plans relevant to the changing context.
3. Generate lessons for current and future ActionAid emergency responses.
4. Track qualitative and quantitative information to monitor our impact against the change promises in *People's action to end poverty*.

Evaluations of the ERRP will include a real time evaluation (RTE) conducted within three months of the start of the emergency response (see **http://goo.gl/asTkFk** for a sample ToR for an RTE). Subsequent reviews and external evaluations will be planned for at regular intervals (depending on the scale of the disaster).

All reviews and evaluations will cover: an analysis of ActionAid's adherence to the Red Cross Code of Conduct, value for money, accountability to disaster-affected communities, and indicators against objectives and outcomes, in addition to other areas as required by donors.

A useful guide on using OECD DAC criteria to evaluate humanitarian response can be found at:
http://www.alnap.org/resource/5253.aspx

You can find a standard ToR for emergency evaluations, which can be contextualised when commissioning external evaluations at: **http://goo.gl/asTkFk.** Further information can be found here: **https://hive.actionaid.org/UK/Evaluation/SitePages/Home.aspx**

The Evaluating Humanitarian Action Guide **http://www.alnap.org/eha#** supports evaluation specialists and non-specialists in every stage of an evaluation, from initial decision to final dissemination.

M&E processes must be done professionally, with adequate finance and human resources allocated to manage them properly. A number of standards should also be followed:

- usefulness – all M&E processes must be useful
- cost-effectiveness – best option selected from alternatives
- independence and impartiality – should generate unbiased and objective assessment, and those involved should not have conflict of interest
- accountable – all processes must be transparent, open and people who participated must have feedback in appropriate language
- ethical – will follow ethical procedure of information collection.

ActionAid's approach to M&E in emergencies

M&E activity	Timeframe	Focus and objectives	Guideline
Monitoring	regular –throughout programme period	• understand changing context and recovery status of rights holders • assess the timeliness, adequacy and quality of our response against target – plans and budget • identify strengths and weakness of our programming and management process to deliver programme effectively • identify existing and emerging risks • deliver accountability to donors and supporters	• allocate budget and staff time for M&E – recruit dedicated staff if needed • integrate with accountability process – e.g. community review and social auditing • include logframe indicators and examine inputs in relation to output and outcome of logframe (as agreed with donors) • examine programme quality and timeliness, finance, risk and policy work • build on regular process – e.g. activity and finance reporting, field visit, finance report • carefully manage data and numbers • don't always approach it technically – adopt broad approach analysing recovery level of rights holders and your contribution – and see the gaps • use findings to modify programme

M&E activity	Timeframe	Focus and objectives	Guideline
Real time evaluation – RTE	during a project – and early enough to influence programme process – ideally within three months of the start of the emergency response	• understand the relevance of programme strategy in the context • validate ability of programme strategy and approach to meet short- and long-term needs • effectiveness of management process – identification of risks • changes required in strategy and planning • gaps in capacity and funds to achieve programme goals	• design it as forward looking and improvement-orientated • note key operational and strategic challenges • define the ToR in relation to programme strategy, approach as well as logframe – consult with IHART and Oversight Group • make it a short and quick one • commission to external – but internal may take part • organise effective de-briefing (as people may not have time to read report) • share report with IHART and Oversight Group

M&E activity	Timeframe	Focus and objectives	Guideline
Final evaluation (can also have mid-term, depending on size and duration – and meta evaluation of several project evaluations)	at the end of all donor funded projects – and programme-wide evaluation at the end of ERRP	• assessing accountability to donor, ActionAid and disaster-affected communities • generating learning: for future emergency responses • focus: strategy, programme design, capacity, funds, risks and transition • determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability	• use of established evaluation criteria: OECD/DAC criteria or other established standards e.g. Sphere standards • conduct mid-term review if ERRP's duration is three years or more • use logframe to formulate evaluation questions • share ToR with donors, if funded • conducted by external consultants, or a mixture of external and internal • several specific evaluations can also be conducted for organisational learning • conduct meta evaluation of several evaluations by IHART – to see overall trends of performance

M&E activity	Timeframe	Focus and objectives	Guideline
Impact study	depending on nature of programme – ideally after one to three years of programme ending	• understand impact of programme on people and policy environment – in relation to disaster recovery, poverty and resilience, often end-line study can be done against baseline indicators (if available)	

Develop a risk matrix

Risks are an unavoidable part of disaster response. The success of a response depends on how efficiently we can identify and manage those risks. Risks should have both mitigation and contingency plans. Sources of risk can be internal or external/contextual. Examples of common types of risk include:

- **Programme quality:** risks which mean the disaster response programme does not benefit the most vulnerable people. These include a lack of participation of the affected community, poor technical capacity, lack of understanding of ActionAid's human rights-based approach, poor needs assessment etc.
- **Delay in implementation:** risks that affect timeliness of programme delivery. These include logistical problems, delays in recruitment, lack of clarity in decision-making, delays in disbursement of funds etc.
- **Financial risk:** risks that mean ActionAid does not meet the required standards in financial management. These include inaccurate reporting, delayed reporting, misuse of funds, theft, double reporting. Some of these factors may be a case of deliberate misuse of funds, and others a result of mistakes or a lack of capacity of ActionAid staff and partners.
- **Reputational risk:** the risk that poor performance in one part of ActionAid (e.g. poor financial management, slow or inefficient response, complaints from affected community etc) negatively affects ActionAid's public profile, ability to raise fund and influence others. These include negative media coverage, negative assessments from other NGOs or donors, complaints from affected communities, etc.
- **Risk associated with staff:** risks that limit the ability of staff to work productively, to innovate, to facilitate participation and timely decision-making. These include insecurity, stress, lack of motivation, lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities.

To manage these risks, all ERRPs will develop a risk matrix, which should be updated regularly. An example of a risk matrix is available at **http://goo.gl/asTkFk**, which can be adapted for the specific Emergency Response and Resilience Programme.

All risk registers should contain three strands:

1. risk assessment concerning programme quality, timeliness of delivery, financial risk, security risk and reputational risk to ActionAid
2. robust risk management actions
3. clearly defined responsibilities and accountabilities to implement risk management actions.

An update on risk management measures will be included in management reports (as agreed with Oversight Groups).

Fundraising

Develop a fundraising plan

Who does this: member/country programme, with support from IHART and International Fundraising
Based on the Emergency Programme Plan and budget showing funding gaps, the member/country programme will prepare a fundraising plan, with support from IHART and International Fundraising. See **http://goo.gl/asTkFk** for a template contains a template for this fundraising plan. Based on this information, the member/country programme will prepare funding proposals with technical support from IHART and International Fundraising.
An important part of the fundraising plan is identifying and prioritising potential donors who might fund the emergency (called donor scoping). This process can be started before an emergency, by identifying key humanitarian donors at a national, regional and international level, and finding out information about what they fund, their requirements and the process for applying. It is also important to start building relationships with donors before an emergency, so that they are aware of ActionAid's humanitarian work and view us as a credible partner in emergencies.

Some of the key humanitarian donors include:
- AusAID
- Danida
- DFID
- ECHO
- Irish Aid
- SIDA
- UN agencies
- trusts & foundations
- collective fundraising from public appeals (e.g. AGIRE, DEC etc.).

Annex 11 contains a quick reference guide with more information about these donors. It also contains a template and advice on donor scoping and relationship building.

Submit proposals to institutional donors, trusts and major donors

Who does this: member/country programme and fundraising affiliates, with support of International Fundraising and IHART
Fundraising will be co-ordinated through IHART in the initial weeks of a disaster, except in the case of some institutional donor fundraising where specific information is needed or support required by the affected country (e.g. DFID; ECHO; DEC), in which case IHART will be kept informed. International Fundraising/IPD will advise and support fundraising countries on fundraising activities relevant to their market. IHART will liaise with the International Communications Team and the affected country to ensure that information and communications content requirements for fundraising are met.
IHART will share regular updates on the disaster response with the wider federation (including situation reports, rapid and needs assessment reports, Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan). Fundraising affiliates will then be expected to submit proposals to appropriate donors within their countries, including institutional donors, trusts, foundations and major donors. Affiliates should link with IHART in the first instance to share information on planned fundraising and to request additional information needed from the member/country programme. They should also ask IHART to review proposals before submitting, to check for technical accuracy and accordance with ActionAid's human rights-based approach in emergencies. IHART will liaise with the member/county programme on behalf of the fundraising affiliate, and will facilitate direct contact where appropriate.

The member/country programme is responsible for submitting proposals to multilateral donors, including the EU and UN agencies, with the support of International Fundraising. IHART should review proposals before submission to check for technical accuracy and accordance with ActionAid's rights-based approach in emergencies. IHART will liaise with the member/county programme on behalf of International Fundraising, and will facilitate direct contact where appropriate.
The decision on whether to apply for funding opportunities remains with the member/country programme. In some cases, the member/country programme may not wish to apply for smaller grants that have a high burden of reporting requirements. In orange and red alert level disasters, the Oversight Group will provide advice and review decisions to decline funding.

ECHO emergency financing decision

ECHO emergency financing decisions apply both to new crises and established humanitarian crises where humanitarian response is already under way, but where continuing uncertainty and instability requires an appropriate, rapid and flexible response, e.g. where there are sudden deteriorating weather conditions within a natural disaster situation (a crisis within a crisis). Emergency financing decisions allocate up to **EUR 10,000,000** in total, for actions that are limited to a **maximum of six months.**

At this stage of the emergency, ECHO assumes that the situation will have calmed down somewhat from the initial stages, so unlike with primary emergency financing decisions, for emergency financing decisions **ALL** sections of the ECHO Single Form must be completed.

ECHO may publish the emergency funding decision on their website – see **http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/index_en.htm** – although it is always good practice for colleagues in the disaster-affected country to link directly with in-country ECHO representatives in person or on the phone to check as to whether this funding is likely to be made available/has been made available.

Once written, the emergency funding decision proposal must be submitted by ActionAid UK (as the 'owner' of the ECHO relationship for the whole ActionAid federation) using ECHO's online information exchange platform, known as 'Appel'. Note ECHO **will not** accept applications submitted directly by the ActionAid member/country programme in the affected country. (Please note this is different from the process for EU proposals, which are submitted directly by the member/country programme.)

Please refer to the ECHO emergency funding decision table at **http://goo.gl/asTkFk** to see what actions need to be taken by different parts of the federation in order to respond to the launching of an ECHO emergency funding decision.

High value fundraising

General good practice:
- have specific members of the team who are responsible for leading on emergency fundraising
- have a protocol for your team outlining roles, responsibilities and timelines for actions, with clear follow up plans, when launching a fundraising appeal for high value
- have an agreed disclaimer prepared explaining to donors that 10% of emergency donations go to the DPRF to support future emergencies
- have an up-to-date list ready for trusts and foundations, and major donors who have a specific interest in supporting emergencies and/or have funded emergency appeals in the past – this can then be downloaded quickly in the event of an emergency and an initial appeal can be sent within 12 hours ideally
- set up templates for emails, letters and proposals based on previous emergency appeals, which can be customised to the relevant emergency when it occurs
- get emergency appeals out to donors as soon as possible for red alert emergencies (ideally within 12 hours) – even if this is just very basic information to say it has happened and ActionAid is responding, it can be followed up with a more detailed appeal when more information is available.

High value fundraising

1) Response within the first 72 hours following a disaster

Actions:
- Prepare and send initial email/written communication (first 12 hours) – to include picture or map, basic facts and estimate of how many people affected. "We are working there and scoping out the need – please call us if you are able to support our response. We will be in touch shortly with more information."
- Follow up call where appropriate to trusts/major donors (within 72 hours).
- Start writing a general appeal mailing/proposal, which can be sent out to a wide range of high value donors (within 72 hours).
- Start writing bespoke donor proposals with more detailed information (72 hours to a week).
- Follow up with trusts/major donors contacted initially with more detailed information on the emergency and our response (use proposals prepared above).
- Follow up call to trusts/major donors where appropriate to check whether they received the application and ask if they would like any further information (after a week).
- In all communications with donors try and emphasise ActionAid's point difference in emergencies: our rights-based approach, participatory approaches to involve communities in the emergency response, our long-term presence in communities etc.

NB: ensure agreed disclaimers are included in written communications and that donors are aware of contribution to DPRF.

Information required:
- Sitrep from IHART – basic information on the emergency situation, numbers affected, what ActionAid is doing/planning to do to respond, and funds required if available.
- Strong photograph and case study of someone who has been affected to use in proposals and donor communications.
- Quote from IHART/staff member in country affected by emergency.

NB: we co-ordinate with other fundraising teams when compiling emergency content as our information needs are likely to be similar.

2) Response within the first month following a disaster

Actions:

- Follow up with donors contacted initially but who have not donated – emphasise still need their support.
- Thank donors who have supported the emergency and provide them with an update on how ActionAid has responded.

Information required

- Detailed budgets for bespoke applications.
- More detailed/updated sitrep.
- More comprehensive Emergency Response and Resilience Building Plan, including long-term plans.
- Updates on how ActionAid has been responding, how many people reached to date.
- Case studies and photos of people/communities we have reached.

3) Response six months and beyond

Actions:

- Send six month update to those who supported the emergency.

Information required

- Updates on how ActionAid has been responding, how many people reached to date.
- Case studies and photos of people/communities we have reached.
- Outline of long-term response plan.

Communications

Develop a communications plan

Who does this: member/country programme, with support from International Communications Team

The communications plan should set out how ActionAid will communicate with external stakeholders as part of the emergency response. This should take into consideration the different purposes of communications to support the ERRP – policy work, fundraising, communicating with disaster-affected communities etc. It should identify key targets for communications, the messages that need to be communicated and the channels that will be used to reach each group. International Communications are available to support the development of this plan (see contacts **Annex 4**). Remember that communicating with disaster-affected communities is an essential component – see above in the 'continue implementing disaster response' section for further details.

FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

ECHO and DFID funding decision processes: **http://goo.gl/asTkFk**
Checklist of key management processes: **Annex 10**
Sample ToR for a real time evaluation: **http://goo.gl/asTkFk**
Example of a risk matrix: **http://goo.gl/asTkFk**
Template for an emergency fundraising plan: **http://goo.gl/asTkFk**
Quick reference guide to key humanitarian donors: **Annex 11**
Financial Management Framework and standard ToR for emergency evaluations: **http://goo.gl/asTkFk**
For guidance on good practice in preventing corruption in humanitarian operations: **http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/handbook_of_good_practices_preventing_corruption_in_humanitarian_operations**
The UN global logistics cluster provides lots of resources on logistics in emergencies, including a logistics operational guide: **http://log.logcluster.org**