Final Evaluation Report

Strengthening of Civil Protection/ Disaster Management in the district of Aybak, Samangan Province (Northern Afghanistan)

Welthungerhilfe, Afghanistan
I. Summary

1. Brief Description of the Project and Framework Conditions

This report presents final evaluation results for project titled, “Strengthening of Civil Protection/Disaster Management in the districts of Aybak, Samangan province in Northern Afghanistan”. The main objective of the project was to improve the resilience of risk communities against extreme natural events, through activities in the area of community capacity building on preparedness and response, formation of committees and DRR mitigation infrastructure. The project had three sub-objectives:

- The target communities are better prepared for future natural disasters
- The negative effects of recurring natural disasters on the target communities have been substantially reduced.
- Employees of the local civil protection authorities are enabled to lead and coordinate the 17 DMCs created within the framework of this project after the project end.

In the methodology, a triangulation is presented with emphasis on comprehensive desk review of key internal and external documents relevant to the project, structured questionnaires, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The survey targeted 378 beneficiaries for community resilience against disaster, hygiene campaign and CLTS and 55 recipients for first aid trainings. A total of 12 FGDs and 26 key informants constituted part of this evaluation and these included, 2 non-beneficiaries of the project, 4 DMC members, 5 rescue team members, disaster drill 2017 members, 3 disaster drill 2018 members, 5 project Staff (WHH Project Manager, Field Officer, M&E Officer, Provincial Manager) and 6 members from government and other organizations.

2. Relevancy

The project was relevant because Samangan province and Afghanistan in general is vulnerable to natural disasters just as it had affected many people in the previous years. Improved resilience of at risk communities against extreme natural events, through activities in the area of community capacity building on preparedness and response, formation of committees and DRR mitigation infrastructure was quite relevant. The DRR training courses and the first aid courses activities carried out by WHH were useful and responding to some needs of villages. The Project is coherent with Afghanistan National Disaster National Strategy 2014 – 2017. The strategy lends its focus towards key activities for disaster management by addressing the social and economic needs of vulnerable groups pre and post disasters using equitable approaches in coordination with key stakeholders within the Ministry as well as externally. The selection process was also reported to be on merit and voluntary basis. In addition, there was high level of satisfaction with the trainings among the beneficiaries. The same was reported among first aid beneficiaries.

3. Effectiveness

The disaster management committees exhibited abilities to develop and implement emergency plans, early warning systems and civil protection plans, although there was limited update of the plans. DRR training courses and the first aid courses activities were carried out by WHH and were reported to useful and responding to some needs of villages. There was evidence of changes in the level of knowledge of first aid practices and good hygiene and sanitation practices. However,
despite the stated project achievements, many people still missed out on issues of strengthening natural hazard and climate risk data management and sharing and implementing of a community-led DRM strategy, including community-based risk assessments and early warning systems. The participation of public authorities in project activities was also limited as compared to the community beneficiaries. On a whole, there was evidence of increased disaster preparedness among the target beneficiaries.

4. Efficiency
Regarding efficiency, the resources availed were a little sufficient as indicated by 48.4% response while 26.2% labeled it as somehow sufficient. Through FGDs, it was revealed that while WHH staff tried to reach out on many people to enhance improved hygiene and disaster preparedness, many people particularly those at the border areas missed out. In summary, while community efficiency was attained, economic efficiency was a considerable degree inadequate. In terms of time, there was adequate level of interaction between beneficiaries and WHH project staff to discuss about DRR plan, early warning and emergency plans and project beneficiaries.

5. Outcomes and Impacts
- DMCs were established in (10) villages & (7) schools/clinics and supported. Primary data reveal that an estimated 80% of the beneficiaries were aware of the DMC members and early warning team, rescue team, first aid team as well as their tasks in reducing disaster risks.
- DRR trainings were conducted in 10 villages and distribution emergency kits dispersed in each village. In addition, DRR trainings have been conducted in 7 schools and clinics and distribution of emergency kits. This is supported by primary data where the DRR training course activities carried out by WHH were said to be useful and responding to some needs (increased resilience and knowledge of disaster risk reduction practices within communities) as indicated by 95.8% responses.
- First aid trainings have been conducted in 10 villages and 7 schools and clinics and likewise first aid kits were distributed. The primary data indicate that majority of the beneficiaries of first aid training (94.5% response) had knowledge of the place that first aid kits exist when there is a disaster in the community.
- Hygiene campaigns (community-led total sanitation) have been conducted in 10 villages. This was supported by primary data which indicate high level of satisfaction with the trainings among beneficiaries for community resilience against disaster, hygiene campaign and CLTS as indicated by 93.7% response.
- Disaster drills (simulations) have been conducted in 10 villages and from primary data, it was widely agreed that there was a feeling of presence of disaster management committee has contributed to improved sense of safety in the community as indicated by 91.8% response.
- Construction of 10 DRR infrastructure measures were completed within 10 targeted communities and this activity contributed to community resilience against disasters.
- Orientation workshops on the National Disaster Management Strategy and networking meeting were conducted among DMCs members and relevant stakeholder. This partly contributed to coordination of understanding of the civil protection plans, emergency plans and early warning systems that had been developed within the target communities.
One of the notable impacts was change in the mode of food production so that it takes into account the possibility of a disaster. However, widespread conflict, poor rain-fed staple production and limited labor opportunities were reported to affect food production in the province. The household also registered change in the hygiene practices during an emergency as a result of the hygiene campaigns and CLTS. The change in the hygiene practices were attributed to the capacity building programmes conducted. Other changes included attainment of skills to keep safe in case of a disaster like a flood or a drought or earthquake and functionality of disaster management committees.

6. Sustainability
One of factors for sustainability included establishment of the DMCs in communities, involvement of ANDMA in the project and making coordination between ANDMA and community, and registration of DMCS in ANDMA. Another sustainability measure was establishment of saving group in each community which would also act as a source of funds for project maintenance.

The community was willing to continue with project activities even after WHH leaves. However, financial sustainability remained a challenged as no sources of funds had been identified to enhance continuity of the project after the current grant has ended. Besides, as a means to enhance sustainability, first aid kits were distributed to the respective villages and almost all first aid training beneficiaries (94% response) pledged to continue supporting/participating in the first aid team even when the project ends. Each DMCs received 2 first aid kits as well huge extra quantity of materials included in each first aid kits and expiration date is considered so all valid until year 2020. The project was also successfully registered with the Ministry of Economy (MoE) and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) was signed¹.

7. Most important Recommendations
Based on the evaluation results, the following recommendations were suggested:

1. A number of potential beneficiaries were left out from the project for different reasons and this call upon for expansion of the project activities to the nearby districts.
2. Disaster Management Plans will need to be disseminated for various levels to community members. In order to have an efficient ground based preparedness and response mechanism, it is essential to progressively incorporate this plan into the district annual plan.
3. Sanitation and hygiene campaigns need to be expanded to rest of uncovered communities and places like schools and market centers.

¹ Interim Report No. 1, 25 November 2016