

Lead Agency: ActionAid, **Consortium Members:** ACF, Christian Aid, CAFOD, Care, International Medical Corps, Islamic Relief, Muslim Aid, Plan, Save the Children and Tearfund **Technical Partners:** Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities Network (CDAC-N) People in Aid **Budget:** Total: £2,482,824 **Countries of operation:** Pakistan and Philippines with a regional hub in Thailand (Bangkok) **Timeframe:** 3 years

Where and how did this project originate?

In 2007 a review of surge capacity commissioned by the Emergency Capacity Building Project and carried out by People in Aid highlighted the critical need for global organisations to be able to scale up resources of people, money and materials in order to effectively fulfill their humanitarian mandates, recommending a more collaborative approach. To date, surge capacity efforts for civil society have been more focused on individual agency support at the international level (e.g. the CBHA surge pilot), causing duplication and a lack of shared learning on best practice. It has also overlooked the development of more localized capacity to scale up to support emergencies, and there has been little exploration of the critical role other actors (e.g. private sector, UN, public sector, donors, academic organisations) can play in supporting civil society surge. Start Network agencies, with the support of the Department for International Development's Disaster Emergency Preparedness Programme, have now come together to work collectively to explore and understand how surge capacity can be transformed for the future.

Brief description

There are three key elements to this project i) platform formation ii) pilot projects iii) training, learning and sharing of good practice and resources. This project will predominately be delivered through two types of pilots delivered at national, regional and international levels. The first type will explore new ways for agencies to work together collaboratively on surge capacity support. The second type of pilots will focus on how agencies can work together with external stakeholders such as the private sector and the UN on surge. Recognising the exploratory approach of the proposal, four platforms will be formed to create cohesion across the various pilots being conducted. Two platforms will be at a national level – one in the Philippines led by Christian Aid, one in Pakistan led by ActionAid; one platform will be at a regional level, led by Plan International in Bangkok, and one platform will be at the international level led by ActionAid. The platforms will work together with People in Aid to agree best practice across agencies, to share resources (through shared rosters, for example, that could be held by National Disaster Management Authorities), to hold learning events, and to deliver specific training on capacity building support.

Why is collaboration fundamental to the success of this project?

The core purpose of this proposal is to improve effectiveness and efficiency of surge across the whole humanitarian sector through collaboration. The proposal was developed with the input of Start members and will share learning across the membership, but its benefits will reach much wider. Collaboration with Universities, the private sector, the United Nations, national governments, and links with other networks and consortia such as the Philippine INGO Network (PINGON) and the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF) is essential if the project gains are to be taken to scale.

What change does this project envision to achieve?

This project seeks three changes i) strengthened systems for surge capacity at national and regional levels to better compliment international surge, ii) a move from individual agency surge capacity building to a more collective and collaborative approach to surge, iii) better integration of civil society surge capacity with core stakeholders – including the UN, private sector, public sector and academic institutions.

How will this project make a difference to people affected by crisis?

This project will strengthen civil society surge capacity, thereby contributing to a third sector pillar better able to complement existing United Nations, Red Cross and government structures. Together, the proposed components of the project will improve surge capacity at international, regional and local levels, thereby improving the provision of high quality humanitarian programming to crisis-affected people. This project will deliver surge capacity that is appropriate for a diverse and decentralised humanitarian sector and that can help communities to increase resilience, reduce risk and improve crisis response.

