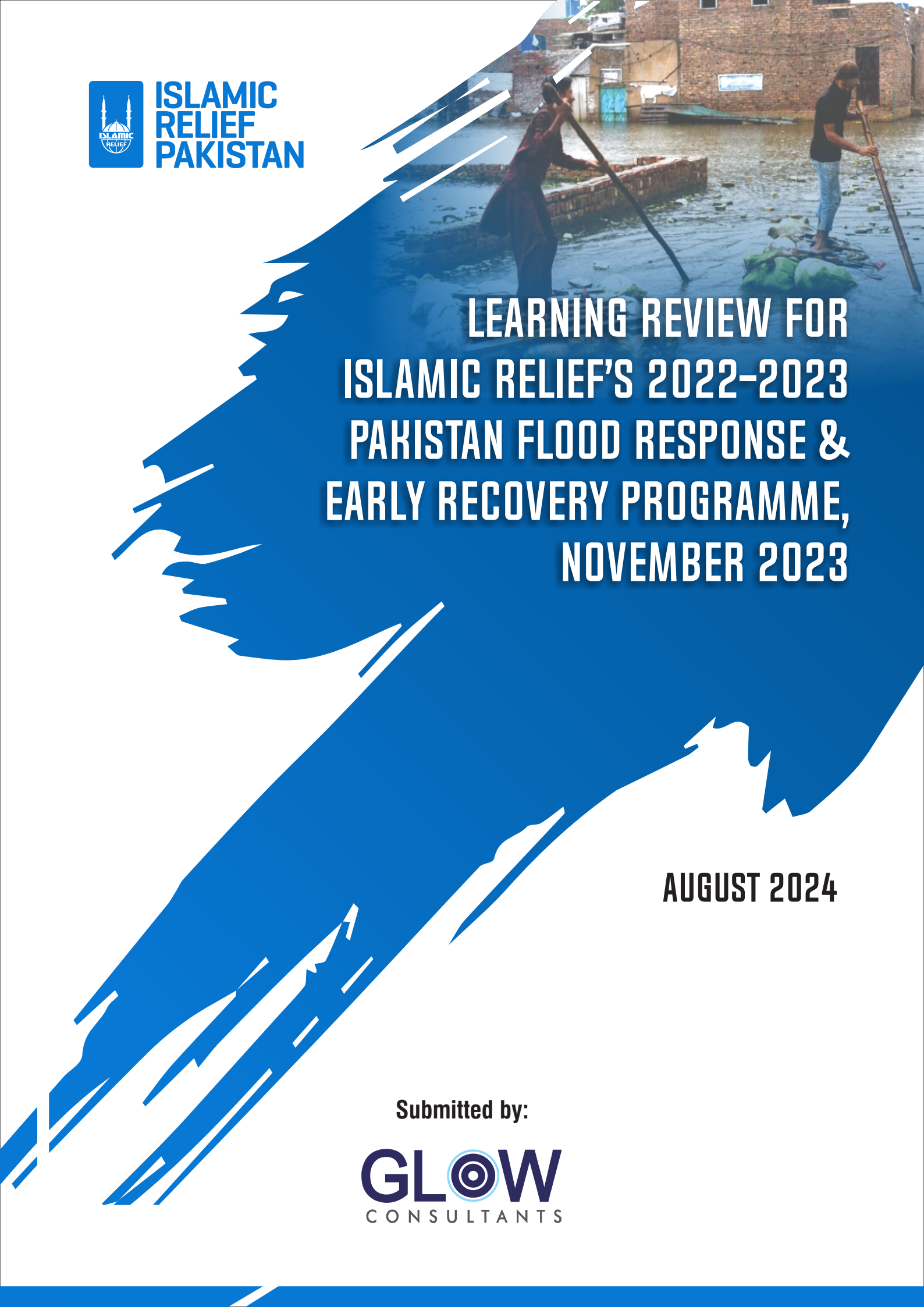




**ISLAMIC
RELIEF
PAKISTAN**

A photograph of a flooded area with two people wading through the water. One person is carrying a large green bag. In the background, there are brick buildings and a small boat. The image is partially covered by a large blue graphic element that resembles a stylized map of Pakistan or a large hand.

LEARNING REVIEW FOR ISLAMIC RELIEF'S 2022-2023 PAKISTAN FLOOD RESPONSE & EARLY RECOVERY PROGRAMME, NOVEMBER 2023

AUGUST 2024

Submitted by:

GL^{OW}
CONSULTANTS



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List of Acronyms

CHS	Core Humanitarian Standards
DDMA	District Disaster Management Authority
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERT	Emergency Response Team
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GRC	Grievance Redressal Committee
HH	Household
IDI	In-depth Interview
IRP	Islamic Relief Pakistan
KII	Key Informant Interview
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
MEAL	National Disaster Management Authority
NFI	Non-Food Items
NOC	No Objection Certificate
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
P&I	Protection & Inclusion
PDMA	Provincial Disaster Management Authority
PHF	Pakistan Humanitarian Forum
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
RR&SD	Relief Rehabilitation & Settlement Department
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOCHA	The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene



Executive Summary

Pakistan experienced a severe disaster due to extreme monsoon rains and glacier melts, described as a "monsoon on steroids" in 2022. The floods impacted over 33 million people, displacing many and devastating 3.6 million acres of crops in Sindh and Balochistan. Islamic Relief Pakistan (IRP), with donor support, provided relief and recovery aid to around 1.5 million people in Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The Learning Review aims to evaluate the effectiveness of IRP's Flood Response and Early Recovery Programme 2022-23, assessing its successes and areas for improvement.

The study utilized a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to gather comprehensive data aligned with Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS). A desk review of key documents, including CHS 2024 and CHS Verification Framework, guided the development of study tools such as beneficiary household survey, key informant interviews (KIIs), and focus group discussions (FGDs). Primary data collection included a 576 beneficiary household assessment across KP, Sindh, and Balochistan, with a balanced gender sample. 12 FGDs and 14 KIIs with different stakeholders including government officials provided qualitative insights and also offered detailed feedback on project interventions. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative data, ensuring robust findings through triangulation.

Key Findings:

People Affected by Crisis - Can Exercise Rights and Participate in Decisions: IRP prioritizes community involvement in disaster interventions, ensuring that aid recipients actively participate in decisions affecting them. Through needs assessments and community consultations, such as those under the UNDP-funded Flood Recovery Programme, IRP gathered data on housing, health, and livelihoods, aligning interventions with beneficiary needs. Continuous community engagement, as seen in the RAPID II project, maintained alignment with local requirements. IRP formed Grievance Redressal Committees and Operation and Maintenance Committees to enhance transparency and accountability. The IRP also focused on culturally appropriate interventions,

modifying designs to suit local preferences, as demonstrated in Dadu. IRP addressed the specific needs of marginalized groups, including women, people with disabilities (PWDs), and children, by conducting targeted focus group discussions and providing tailored support, such as trauma counselling. This inclusive approach, guided by strategic implementation, adherence to international guidelines, and core principles, ensured effective and equitable humanitarian responses.

People Affected by Crisis-Access Timely Support: Ensuring timely support for people and communities is crucial in humanitarian actions, where delays can mean life or death. Rapid response mechanisms, including efficient logistics and Emergency Response Teams (ERTs), are essential. IRP maintains ERTs across Pakistan, with over 100 trained members ready for disaster response. Despite biannual training, IRP faces challenges in maintaining and expanding these teams. A GBP 100,000 fund at headquarters supports immediate disaster responses. Upon an emergency declaration, a panel reviews the situation and activates the fund. IRP also partners with pre-qualified vendors to ensure rapid deployment of supplies within 72 hours. During the recent floods, 52.6% of the target population received assistance within a month, with 20.8% receiving aid within the first week. However, accessibility issues, especially in Sindh and Balochistan, led to delays. Despite challenges, IRP's efforts were positively received, although constant movement of displaced populations complicated aid delivery.

People Affected by Crisis - Are Better Prepared and More Resilient: Empowering individuals and communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from crises is vital for effective relief efforts. This principle emphasizes proactive measures to enhance preparedness and resilience against disasters, conflicts, and emergencies. Disaster preparedness involves developing long-term strategies, such as disaster risk reduction training, early warning systems, and fostering sustainable livelihoods. For example, IRP's RISE project trained local communities in disaster response, while the RAIR project promoted sustainable livelihoods through micro-entrepreneurship. Additionally, IRP's buffalo distribution project in Dadu-Sindh improved nutritional needs and financial resilience by enabling surplus milk sales. Utilizing local knowledge and resources, IRP established community committees, trained members, and engaged local vendors and labour, thereby strengthening local capacities and economies. The beneficiary household survey revealed that 89.3% felt the projects effectively prepared their communities for future emergencies, demonstrating the positive impact on resilience.

People Affected by Crisis - Access Support that Does Not Harm People or Environment: The connection between natural disasters and climate change has prompted the IRP to integrate environmental considerations into its projects, particularly in response to the 2022 floods. IRP has emphasized the importance of climate awareness and environmental protection by collaborating with various departments and agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, irrigation, and soil conservation departments. Key initiatives include advocating for climate-smart land and water use practices, conducting awareness sessions, and promoting environmentally friendly community activities like tree plantation and reduced plastic use. The VOCAL campaign has been a cornerstone of IRP's efforts, mobilizing local communities and stakeholders to address climate change impacts and build resilience through comprehensive watershed management and sustainable practices.

People Affected by Crisis - Can Safely Report Concerns and Complaints: Ensuring that people and communities can safely report concerns and complaints and have them addressed is fundamental in humanitarian work. IRP has established a trusted, transparent, and accessible system for handling grievances and feedback, ensuring transparency and accountability. Utilizing the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) framework, IRP's mechanisms align with the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS). From the project's outset, clear communication with

the target population and stakeholders was prioritized using various channels, including hotlines, suggestion boxes, community meetings, and digital platforms. Special attention was given to inclusivity, providing anonymity options and addressing the needs of women and PWDs. Despite the majority being informed about complaint processes, a notable portion received incomplete information, highlighting areas for improvement. While response times were generally prompt, a lack of awareness about the complaint resolution process indicates a need for better communication and community engagement.

People Affected by Crisis - Access Coordinated and Complementary Support: To ensure effective support for people and communities, IRP employed a decentralized decision-making approach during the flood event, utilizing field operations and virtual communication for rapid response. IRP coordinates with various stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental organizations, facilitated access to affected areas and the delivery of humanitarian aid. IRP's efforts were complemented by daily meetings of IR International Programme Directors, strategic financial management, and collaboration with local authorities and civil society. Challenges such as administrative delays and data gaps were mitigated through robust field-level coordination and partnerships with entities like the National Disaster Management Authority and the United Nations. Despite limited media coverage, IRP successfully raised global awareness and extended response periods, transitioning from immediate relief to recovery and rehabilitation. This multifaceted coordination ensured alignment with Pakistan's humanitarian appeal and prevented duplication of efforts.

People Affected by Crisis - Support Adapted Based on Feedback: An important aspect is fostering a culture of learning within organizations, which encourages staff to reflect, share insights, and learn from experiences. This is facilitated through regular training, workshops, and learning sessions to ensure knowledge is continuously updated. For instance, the IRP organized reflection workshops under the IRP RAPID II project and UNDP funded Flood Recovery Programme, involving diverse stakeholders to integrate insights into future planning. Monitoring by the IRP MEAL team and feedback from community inputs led to adaptations like transitioning to cashless banking and modifying shelter designs to better meet local needs. High-profile visits and technical expert inputs ensured the quality of interventions. Feedback from Post-Distribution Monitoring highlighted issues such as unauthorized retailer fees in cashless banking, leading to corrective actions. These adaptive measures, including enhanced shelter designs and responsive relief efforts, demonstrate IRP's commitment to integrating feedback for continuous improvement.

People Affected by Crisis - Interaction with Respectful, Competent and Well-managed Staff: Respectful interactions are fundamental, involving the dignified treatment of every individual, fostering trust essential for cooperation and aid delivery. IRP established a Well-Being/Safeguarding Team in 2019 to implement safeguarding policies across Pakistan, educating staff, vendors, interns, and volunteers on safeguarding commitments and the Code of Conduct. Guided by a global strategy contextualized for Pakistan, IRP ensures adherence to technical standards in inclusion, protection, and gender justice. Separate men's and women's Community Organizations (COs) were formed in each targeted village, ensuring equal aid access and decision-making participation. The COs were trained on IRP policies, including protection policies, and involved in beneficiary selection. Continuous capacity building on safeguarding and inclusive practices is recommended. IRP's Code of Conduct, prohibiting exploitation, abuse, harassment, or discrimination, is reinforced through training, real-life scenarios, and regular updates. Reporting mechanisms for violations are accessible and confidential. Familiarity with the local area enhances staff effectiveness, reflected in the positive perception of their local experience. IRP promotes a diverse, inclusive environment, with women staff interacting with female community members, and leadership roles for minorities. This diversification ensures all community segments are included and treated with respect.

People Affected by Crisis - Can Expect Ethical and Responsible Management of Resources: People and communities impacted by crises can expect humanitarian operations to manage resources ethically and responsibly, ensuring aid reaches those in need. Organizations must adhere to rigorous financial oversight, regular audits, and transparent reporting to stakeholders. Good financial practices, including robust internal controls, regular internal and external audits, and clear procurement policies, are essential to prevent fraud and mismanagement. Under the UNDP-funded Flood Recovery Programme, IRP implemented stringent resource management practices such as detailed financial tracking, periodic audits, and public disclosure of expenditures, enhancing transparency and accountability. The HH survey data shows 70.8% of respondents believe funds were appropriately allocated, reflecting strong confidence in financial management. The IRP MEAL team also ensured quality and accountability through various monitoring checklists, validating right holders based on vulnerability criteria to maintain transparency throughout the process.

Recommendations:

The key recommendations from the study are as follows:

- Advocate at relevant forums such as NHN, PHF etc. for establishing a centralized data hub that integrates data from government departments, humanitarian organizations, and others like UNOCHA. This hub should facilitate real-time data sharing to enable swift response. This data hub needs to remain active during relief and recovery phases.
- Advocate at relevant forums such as NHN, PHF etc. for establishing a coordinated strategy that includes government departments, humanitarian organizations, and media outlets that can expedite the dissemination of critical data through various local and international media platforms. This platform should prioritize real-time reporting of damages and affected populations to facilitate fast mobilization of resources and response from donors and international humanitarian actors.
- Further strengthen partnerships with local authorities and community organizations to address access challenges in hard-to-reach areas to prepare for future disasters.
- Further, enhance and ensure the availability of standby funding arrangements for emergency response such as for quick disbursement of funds to enable immediate humanitarian action without delays.
- Enhance the list of pre-qualified local vendors for a variety of emergency items ensuring geographical spread covering all the disaster-prone districts of the country.
- Develop a user-friendly mobile application or digital platform in local languages, enabling displaced individuals to register themselves and provide essential information such as location, family size, and specific needs. This would help IRP and other organizations to track and monitor the locations of the frequently relocating displaced populations due to evolving emergency situations resulting in changing needs of the affected population.
- Continue linkages with previously trained volunteers (ERT members) and also further conduct similar trainings to other community volunteers in disaster prone areas of the country.
- To strengthen disaster resilience and economic stability in flood-affected areas, prioritize initiatives that integrate sustainable livelihood development such as livestock farming and micro-entrepreneurship trainings.
- Further, build on the climate friendly solutions and interventions implemented in the floods 2022 response such as by avoiding single-use plastic water bottles or utilizing biodegradable or reusable materials for emergency supplies packaging.

Introduction

1.1. Background

In 2022, Pakistan faced an unprecedented disaster due to the intense monsoon rains and glacier melts. The situation was termed a "monsoon on steroids" the subsequent floods affected more than 33 million people across the country, resulting in massive displacement of the population. The agriculture sector bore the brunt of the disaster, with crops destroyed across 3.6 million acres of land, specifically in Sindh and Balochistan provinces.

Following this crisis, Islamic Relief Pakistan (IRP), in collaboration with various donors, has been actively involved in relief and recovery interventions in the flood-affected regions of Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) reaching out to approximately 1.5 million individuals.



Figure 1: Study Locations

1.2. Purpose and Scope of the Study

To analyse the effectiveness and relevance of the Pakistan Flood Response and Early Recovery Programme 2022-23, this Learning Review is conducted. The main goal of this Learning Review was to thoroughly assess the successes and potential areas of improvement within the IRP Flood Response and Early Recovery Programme 2022-23. The study aimed to capture both achievements and insights that can inform and enhance future responses. This study covered primary data collection related to IRP flood interventions in a total of eight districts in three provinces of Balochistan (Jafarabad, Naseerabad and Sohbatpur), Sindh (Dadu, Mirpur Khas and Qambar Shahdad Kot) and KP (Dera Ismail Khan and Tank). The Learning Review primarily focused on flood response and early recovery projects conducted within this timeframe.

Study Methodology

A mixed-method approach was used to conduct the study. This approach recognizes the importance of considering a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to gather comprehensive data. The study tools were developed in alignment with the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) for this learning review exercise.

2.1. Desk Review

A thorough desk review of relevant documents was carried out including documents available publicly and/or provided by IRP. The CHS 2024, CHS on Quality and Accountability - Verification Framework 2016; and Learning Review Questions - CHS Verification Framework were used as guidance for developing the overall study tools i.e. Beneficiary Household (HH) survey, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

2.2. Field Data Collection

The following is a summary of the primary data collected under this learning review.

Table 1: Data Collection Events

Activity Description	Stakeholders	Number of Events
Household Assessment	Male and Female Beneficiaries	576
Key Informant Interviews	IRP Programme Staff, MEAL Staff, Procurement Staff, Finance Staff, INGOs/NGOs/Clusters and Government Officials	14
Focus Group Discussions	Project beneficiaries	12

Further details of each data collection activity are provided below:

2.2.1 Household Assessment

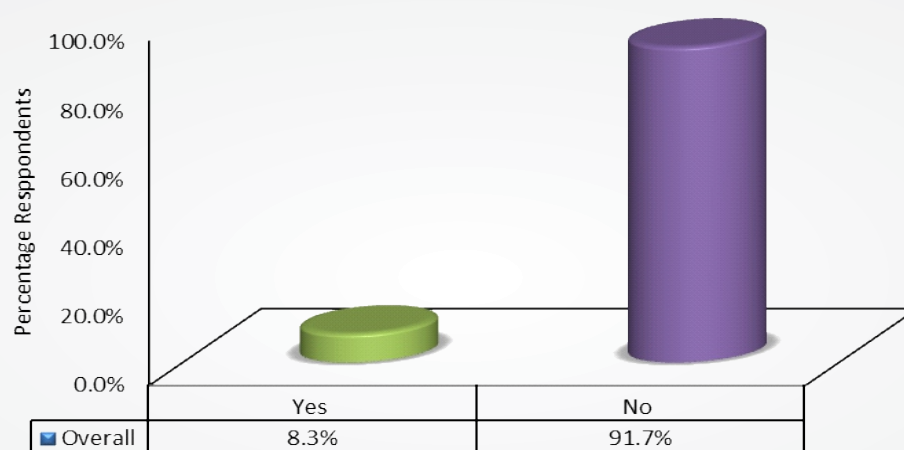
Quantitative data was collected through beneficiary HH assessment. The sample size of 576 was covered in the project provinces i.e., KP, Sindh and Balochistan. The sample was equally distributed between men and women beneficiary respondents¹. Further, a multistage random sampling technique was used to select the sample from six districts i.e., two districts per province, and data was collected from 24 project villages i.e., 4 project villages per district. The sampling strategy aimed for a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error.

¹ The actual sample achieved had 289 men and 287 women respondents

Table 2: Distribution of HH Assessment Sample Size

Province	Districts	Proportional Sample	Sample Gender Distribution	
			Male	Female
KP	Dera Ismail Khan and Tank	192	96	96
Sindh	Dadu and Mirpur Khas	192	96	96
Balochistan	Naseerabad and Jafferabad	192	97	95
Grand Total		576	289	287

The achieved sample included marginalized groups such as 8.3% of persons with disabilities (PWDs) were part of the HH survey respondents.

**Figure 2: Survey Participants with Disabilities²**

Similarly, the achieved sample also had respondents from 12.7% women and 0.3% child-headed HHs.

² Exact question asked in the HH survey was "Do you have any disability/ies?"

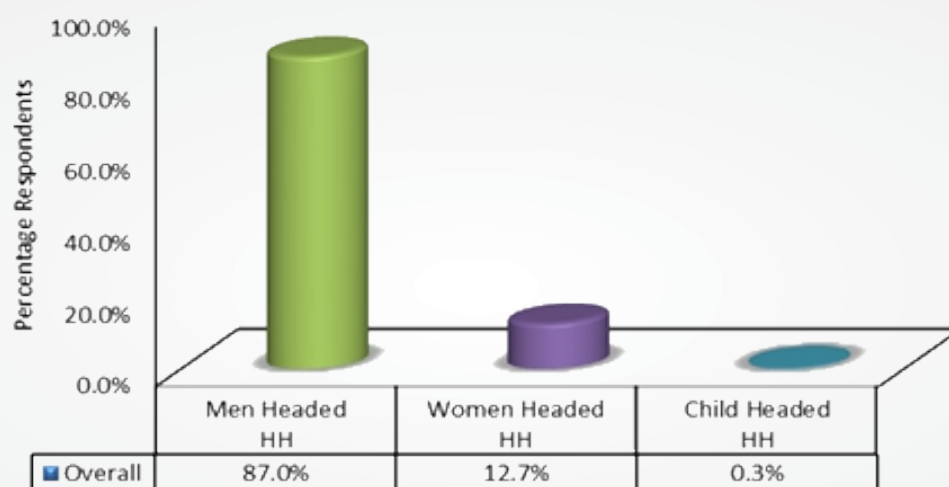


Figure 3: Survey Participants Heads of HHs

2.2.2 Key Informant Interviews

KIIs were conducted using semi-structured interview tools. The approach used for KIIs was qualitative in nature. The selection of interviewees was as gender balanced as possible. Each KII lasted 45-60 minutes. The interviewer noted the KII in Urdu or English language which was later transcribed in English.

Table 3: Distribution of KII Sample Size

Sr. #	Description	Number of Interviews
1	IRP Programme Staff	2
2	IRP MEAL Staff	2
3	IRP Procurement Staff	1
4	IRP Finance Staff	1
5	INGOs/NGOs/Clusters	3
6	Government Officials	5
Grand Total		14

2.2.3 Focus Group Discussions

FGDs were conducted with project beneficiaries to collect qualitative information from the different community groups including women and PWDs. FGDs in this exercise helped provide an in-depth understanding of the project interventions such as shelter, education, food security and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). Before the start of the FGD,

participants were fully briefed on the purpose of the FGD, and also on participants' privacy. For each of the FGDs, participation was voluntary, and participants were allowed to leave the FGD at any moment they opted to. FGDs were noted down in the local/English language. The time of each FGD was around 60 minutes. A total of 12 FGDs were conducted, in each FGD, up to eight participants joined the session, and separate sessions for women and men were organized in each of the districts.

Table 4: Distribution of FGDs Sample Size

Province	Districts	# of Villages	Proportional Sample	Sample Gender Distribution	
				Male	Female
KP	Dera Ismail Khan and Tank	4 (2 per district)	4	2	2
Sindh	Dadu and Mirpur Khas	4 (2 per district)	4	2	2
Balochistan	Naseerabad and Jafarabad	4 (2 per district)	4	2	2
Grand Total			12	6	6

2.3. Analysis and Report Writing Phase

All quantitative data collected through HH assessment for this Learning Review was entered using CPro based data entry frame. The data was analysed using SPSS. The qualitative data notes were prepared in the English language. Once transcripts were developed, they were labelled. Analysis in this report is structured using the CHS commitments. The data sources were triangulated to enhance the validity of the study findings. Key findings are presented in the form of tables and graphs below in the findings section.



Findings

Following are the key findings derived from this study, and are structured around the CHS commitments:

3.1. People Affected by Crisis – Can Exercise Rights and Participate in Decisions

The community receiving aid due to a disaster situation must actively participate in the intervention they are receiving. This approach empowers the affected community and ensures that the interventions are designed and delivered as per the needs of the beneficiaries. To uphold this principle, IRP conducted community consultations to gather data on HH needs, vulnerabilities and cultural considerations. For instance, under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funded Flood Recovery Programme, IRP conducted a detailed needs assessment and community consultations to engage with the target community before designing interventions. These assessments involved gathering data on housing, sanitation, health, education, and livelihoods through surveys and FGDs. This information ensured that the intervention design addressed the specific needs of the affected communities.

Every decision was made with our consultation. Each person's perspective was valued, and if someone offered valuable advice, it was embraced.

Male Participant – FGD Dadu Sindh

Similarly, IRP ensured that community consultations continued during the implementation as well. For example, during the RAPID II project, IRP prioritized community consultation meetings to ensure that the humanitarian response implementation aligned with the beneficiaries' needs. Through the community consultation process, IRP formed Grievance Redressal Committees (GRC) and Operation and Maintenance (O&M) committees in a participatory manner in the targeted villages, ensuring accountability, transparency and responsiveness.

All decisions and actions were guided by the village committee, and input from all members was valued ensuring inclusivity. Suggestions were actively solicited and readily embraced, fostering a collaborative and empowering environment.

Male Participant – FGD Dadu Sindh

In every village where Islamic Relief worked, they engaged closely with local people, establishing committees comprising community members. This approach instilled a sense of ownership among the people; it made people feel as if the project was their own.

Male Participant – KII Government Dadu Sindh

Throughout their activities, they actively engaged every individual in the decision-making process”

Male Participant – FGD Naseerabad Balochistan

The feedback from the beneficiaries in the below figure suggests that approximately 82.4% of the respondents fully or partially agreed that IRP consulted them during project implementation.



Figure 4: Survey Participants – Were Communities Consulted³

³ Exact question asked in the HH survey was “Did the project consult the affected population during implementation?”

For better understanding relevant key aspects are discussed separately below:

3.1.1 Understanding and Addressing Household Needs

IRP selected the intervention districts and villages based on the needs assessment studies where needs seemed higher e.g. considering the level of damages.



Yes, IRP targeted most vulnerable, where the need was most critical.

Male Participant – KII Government Jaffarabad Balochistan

Approximately, 96.8% of beneficiaries agreed (fully or partially) that the interventions provided met their needs.

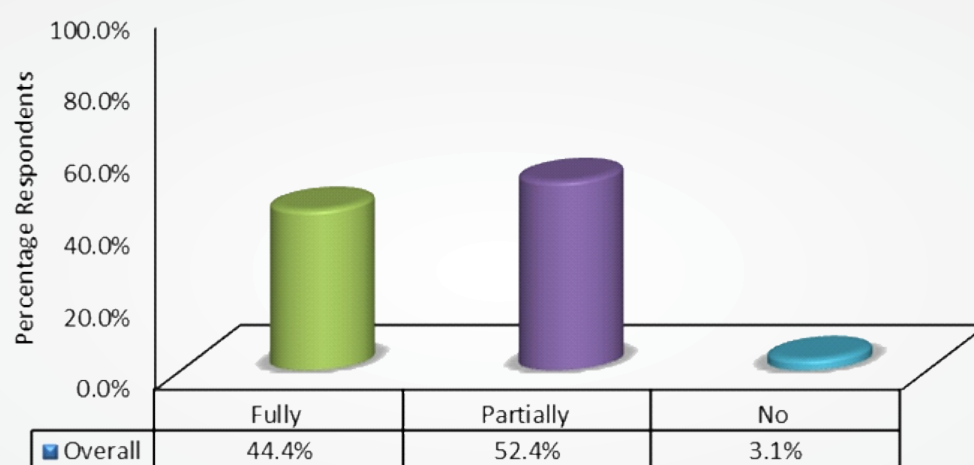


Figure 5: Survey Participants – Project Activities Addressed Needs⁴

The displacement of the disaster-prone population particularly when they shift their location multiple times significantly complicates providing and tracking relief efforts. Consequently, accurately assessing the evolving needs of people who are constantly moving becomes challenging. Other factors contributing to dissatisfaction included resource constraints and availability of reliable data.

⁴ Exact question asked in the HH survey was “How much did the project activities address the specific needs and priorities of your household?”

3.1.2 Designing and Delivering Culturally Appropriate Interventions

For a humanitarian intervention to be culturally appropriate, the project design should align with the cultural values of the target group. The specific project activities and strategies should reflect the norms and attitudes of the beneficiary group. As reflected in the figure below, data shows that 98.1% of the beneficiaries agreed (fully or partially) that interventions were culturally appropriate.

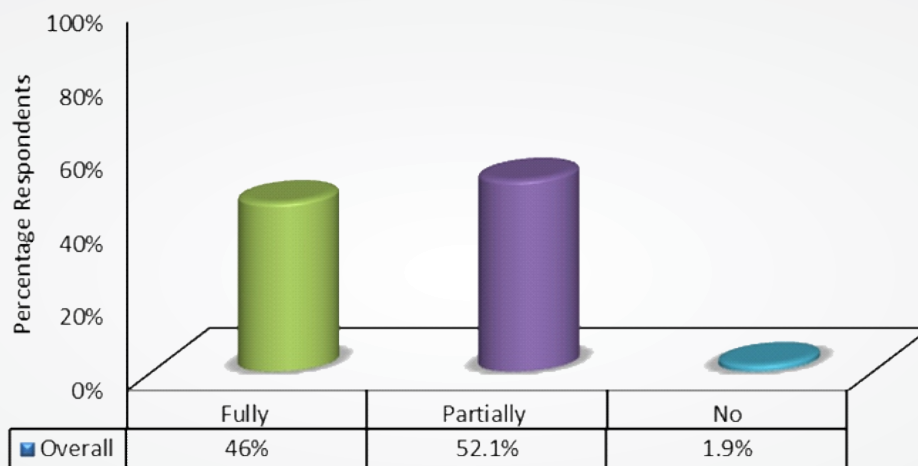


Figure 6: Survey Participants – Was Assistance Culturally Appropriate⁵

IRP ensured that relief and recovery efforts adhered to the culture norms and local conditions of the affected communities. For instance, in Dadu, the originally proposed shelter design was not suitable for the area. IRP modified the design to provide better ventilation by building larger windows and strategically placed openings for natural air circulation. These modifications, inspired by local architectural designs, better suited the hot climate of the area and aligned with local preferences. This adaptation process demonstrates IRP's responsiveness to real-time needs and conditions on the ground.

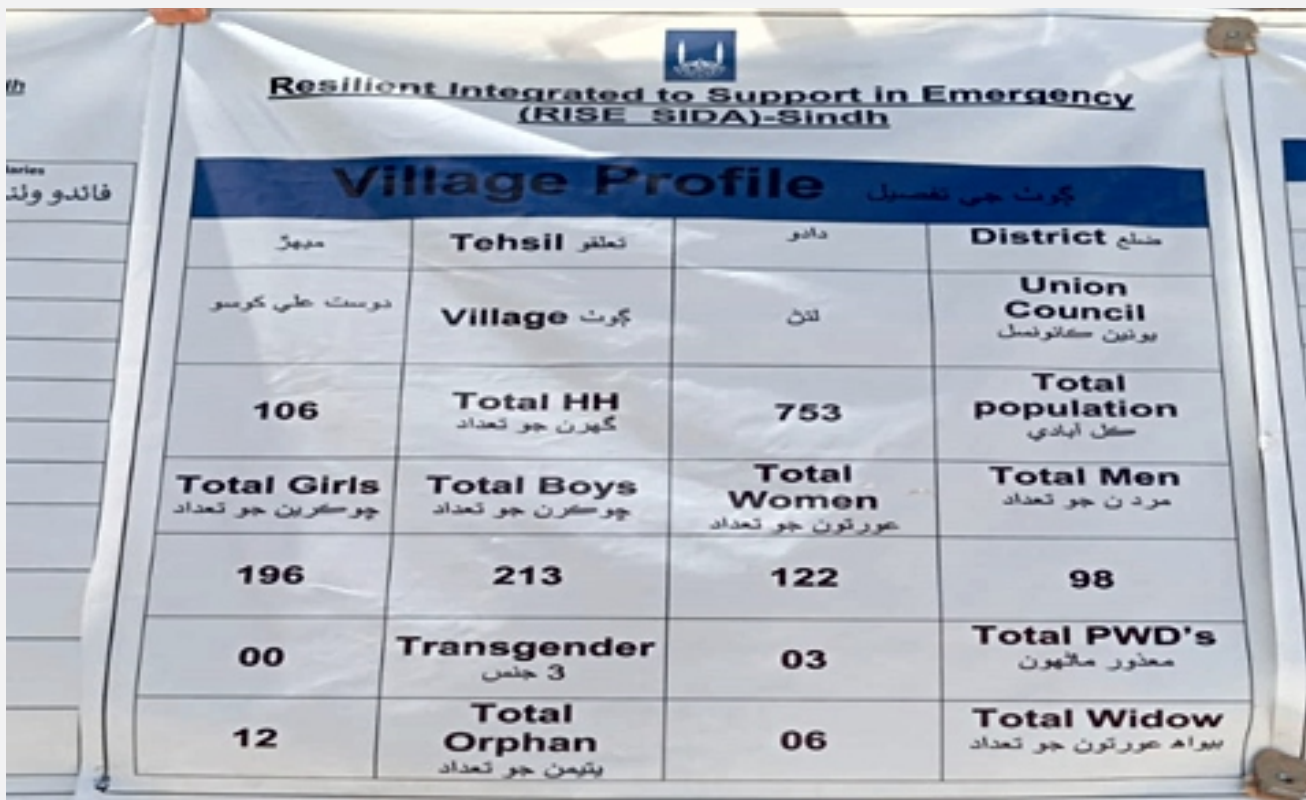
The interventions provided by IRP were aligned with our requirements, and challenges were comprehensively addressed. Moreover, all interventions offered were culturally and traditionally appropriate.

Male Participant – FGD D I Khan KP

⁵ Exact question asked in the HH survey was "To what extent was the assistance culturally appropriate to your household?"

3.1.3 Acknowledging and Responding to the Specific Needs of Marginalized Groups

IRP conducted needs assessments with diverse community groups to ensure they hear the voices and include the needs of vulnerable/marginalized groups in interventions. This included identifying the specific needs of women, PWDs, minorities and children. Hence, IRP organized separate FDGs with women (which included pregnant and lactating women) and with PWDs to identify their particular needs. Moreover, consultation meetings were conducted in accessible venues to accommodate all participants including PWDs. IRP field teams included women staff as it is necessary to reach out to the women beneficiaries in particular such as lactating mothers, adolescent girls, and pregnant women. As a result, IRP interventions included strategies catering to the specific diet and hygiene needs of pregnant and lactating women. For instance, under the RAPID II project, the IRP team held exclusive sessions with women and PWDs to understand their unique needs and concerns. Under this project gender orientation sessions were held in each of the targeted villages with the members of the O&M committees. This targeted approach ensured that the response was addressing the distinct needs of these vulnerable groups.



میدہ	Tehsil تعلقہ	دادو	District ضلع
نوسٹ علی کوسو	Village گروٹ	لٹن	Union Council یونین کائونسل
106	Total HH گھرن جو تعداد	753	Total population سکل آبادی
Total Girls چوسکرن جو تعداد	Total Boys چوسکرن جو تعداد	Total Women عورتون جو تعداد	Total Men مردن جو تعداد
196	213	122	98
00	Transgender 3 جنس	03	Total PWD's معذور ماڻھون
12	Total Orphan یتیمن جو تعداد	06	Total Widow ڀواھ عورتون جو تعداد

Figure 7: IRP Displayed Gender Disaggregated Information

IRP interventions prioritized women-headed HHs (another vulnerable and marginalized group) and HHs including PWDs as the beneficiaries of project interventions. For example, the HH survey conducted under this lesson learnt exercise shows that 13.5% of the respondents (IRP intervention beneficiaries) had PWDs in their HHs.

**13.5 %**

Figure 8: Survey Participants – PWDs living in their HH⁶

Similarly, 16.1% respondents of the HH survey shared that they have a widow in their HHs.

**16.1 %**

Figure 9: Survey Participants – Widow living in their HH⁷

⁶ Exact question asked in the HH survey was “Are there any PWDs living in your HH?”

⁷ Exact question asked in the HH survey was “Is there any widow living in this HH?”

Box 1: Case Study: Women Economic Empowering – A Journey from Crisis to Stability

Bibi ⁸, a widow residing in a village⁹ District Tank, has faced numerous challenges throughout her life. As a mother of three sons and two daughters, she struggled to make ends meet and provide for her family. She was relying heavily on zakat¹⁰ and charity from others to get by. Despite these hardships, She remained committed to her children, striving to ensure they were cared for and supported.

The floods of 2022 exacerbated her already challenging situation, leaving her in urgent need of support to rebuild her life and provide for her family.

In response to the crisis, Islamic Relief stepped in to assist Bibi and her family. Recognizing the immediate need for a sustainable solution, the Islamic Relief provided Bibi with a cow. This intervention was not merely a temporary fix but a strategic measure to help her regain financial stability.

The arrival of the cow brought a transformative change to Bibi's life. She began selling milk from the cow, which became a reliable source of income for her family. The income generated from selling the milk enabled Bibi to purchase daily food items and other essentials, significantly improving her household's financial stability.

Bibi's newfound income not only met her family's immediate needs but also she was able to better care for her children, providing them with the nourishment and support they needed. Bibi admired the efforts of Islamic Relief and appreciated their role in her journey from crisis to stability.

Involving women and other vulnerable groups ensured that the project tailored its response to all segments of the population. Overall, 87.3% of respondents agreed (fully or partially) that the project had equally focused on meeting the needs of vulnerable groups.

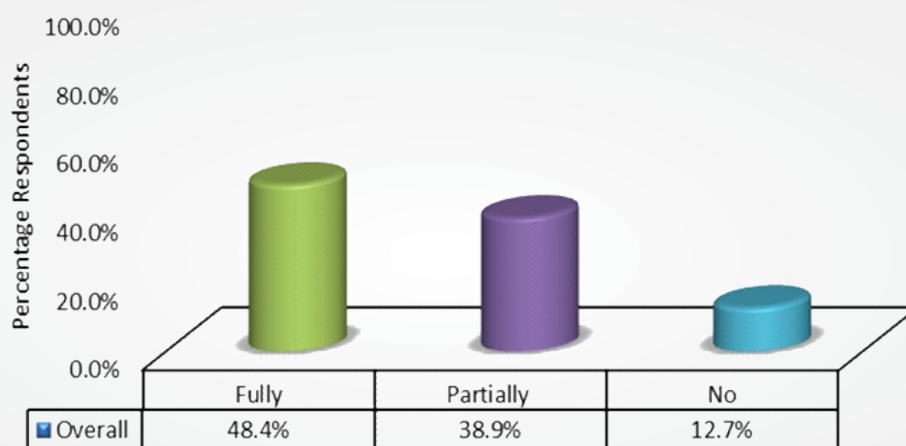


Figure 10: Survey Participants – Due Attention Given to Marginalized Groups¹¹

⁸ Original name removed to ensure privacy

⁹ Name of the village removed to ensure privacy

¹⁰ A type of charity given by Muslims

¹¹ Exact question asked in the HH survey was "Has the project given equal attention to the needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities?"

In addition to women and PWDs, children suffer the most during any disaster situation. Same was also the case in floods 2022 as the floods had a disastrous impact on children's education and psychosocial wellbeing. To address this situation, IRP engaged clinical psychologists, trained in trauma counselling, to help children experiencing psychological challenges. Similarly, IRP identified women who had been displaced and whose children were falling ill due to the harsh conditions, resulting in severe psychological distress for these women. Individual counselling sessions were also organized to support them during this difficult time. These counselling sessions were conducted over a period of 2-3 months, ensuring that beneficiaries received continuous care and support.

These project activities exemplify IRP's focused efforts to meet the distinct needs of marginalized and vulnerable populations. By prioritizing these groups, IRP not only addresses their diverse physical needs but also provided essential psychosocial support.



The entire community was actively involved in the decision-making process throughout the project activities. We felt our voices were heard and valued, which allowed us to participate meaningfully. This inclusivity extended to vulnerable and marginalized groups within the community.

Male Participant – FGD Tank KP



The approach adopted by the Islamic Relief team was highly commendable. They began by establishing a committee within the village, ensuring diverse representation, including women. This committee became instrumental in decision-making processes and project execution.

Male Participant – FGD Dadu Sindh

Overall, the IRP approach for the inclusion of marginalized groups had the following key features.

- **Strategic Implementation:** Interventions were protective, inclusive, and conflict-sensitive, ensuring meaningful access and participation of all ages and abilities. This approach not only addresses immediate needs but also promotes sustainable outcomes by integrating marginalized groups into the decision-making process.
- **Inclusion Marker:** The IRP Inclusion Marker, consisted of six A's (Analysis, Adapted Assistance, Attention to Negative Effects, Adequate Participation, Accountability, and Adequate Capacity), and guided interventions. This systematic approach helps in systematically assessing and addressing the specific needs of marginalized groups throughout the project lifecycle.
- **Alignment with Commitments:** The inclusion framework aligned with IRP's commitments under the Inclusion Charter and the 'Leaving no one Behind' agenda. This ensures that inclusion efforts are not just rhetoric but are embedded in operational practices and organizational values.

- **Guideline Adherence:** IRP used SPHERE, MERS, and MISMA guidelines for selecting the most vulnerable HHs, including women, children, PWDs, minorities, and the elderly, shows IRP's commitment to evidence-based and internationally recognized standards. This approach enhances the effectiveness and credibility of interventions targeting marginalized populations.
- **Principles:** IRP adhered to 'Do No Harm' and 'Protection & Inclusion (P&I)' principles, ensuring adequate participation and accountability throughout the project cycle. These principles emphasize the importance of safeguarding the dignity, rights, and well-being of marginalized groups, while promoting their active participation in decision-making processes.

Box 2: Empowering Communities through Hygiene Awareness

A 30-year-old woman¹² resident of [...] village, district Naseerabad, faced several challenges due to her village's susceptibility to flooding. The floods of 2022 exacerbated her health issues such as allergies, skin diseases, and stomach ailments. Like many in her community, including women and children, She also grappled with these issues. The challenges were further compounded by the lack of awareness about proper health and hygiene practices.

The situation took a positive turn for her and other members of the village when Islamic Relief, a humanitarian organization, launched a series of health and hygiene awareness sessions. These comprehensive sessions covered personal and community-based hygiene practices. Villagers were educated on the importance of regular hand washing, proper waste disposal, and maintaining a clean living environment.

Besides the awareness sessions, Islamic Relief distributed hygiene kits containing essentials like soap, disinfectants, and water purification tablets. For her, these kits were not just supplies but lifelines. Equipped with knowledge from the awareness sessions and provided with practical tools from the hygiene kits, she and her family began implementing these newly learned practices.

The impact was immediate and profound. Instances of allergies, skin diseases, and stomach problems decreased significantly after the intervention. The village, once affected by frequent health problems, saw significant improvements in overall well-being. Children, previously most affected by these health issues, started attending school regularly as their health improved.

She expressed deep appreciation for Islamic Relief's ongoing support and timely intervention. The organization's efforts not only enhance individual health but also foster hope and resilience throughout the community. As a result of these initiatives, villages such as ours are heading in a healthier and more promising direction.

¹² Original name removed to ensure privacy

3.2. People Affected by Crisis – Access Timely Support

Ensuring that people and communities access timely support is a cornerstone of successful humanitarian action. Timeliness is crucial in emergency situations, where delays can mean the difference between life and death. Rapid response mechanisms including efficient logistics are essential for providing immediate relief. One such mechanism includes mobilizing existing Emergency Response Teams (ERT). IRP maintains ERT teams throughout Pakistan, comprising over 100 trained team members who are prepared for any disaster response. These team members had undergone comprehensive training in assessment, delivery, execution, and reporting. Previously, IRP conducted two ERT trainings annually to enhance their capacity, highlighting the importance of continuing these efforts. ERTs are critical to IRP's ability to initiate rapid disaster response within 72 hours. However, IRP faces challenges in maintaining and expanding active ERT pools. IRP has raised this issue with headquarters under its on-going efforts to sustain the ERTs.

Another key aspect of IRP ability of launching immediate disaster response is the GBP 100,000 ready-to-use replenish-able pool fund at IRP headquarters. Upon government declaration of an emergency, an alert is issued, triggering a review by a panel composed of the IRP country director, deputy country director, and humanitarian response manager. Once activated, this pool fund supports IRP's emergency response efforts.

Furthermore, for the provision of timely assistance, IRP engages with pre-qualified vendors for immediate life-saving items such as food, NFIs (Non-Food Items), tents, and hygiene kits. While IRP does not maintain a stockpile system, these vendors ensure rapid deployment of supplies within 72 hours.

Based on the above features, the following figure shows the timely delivery of assistance to the

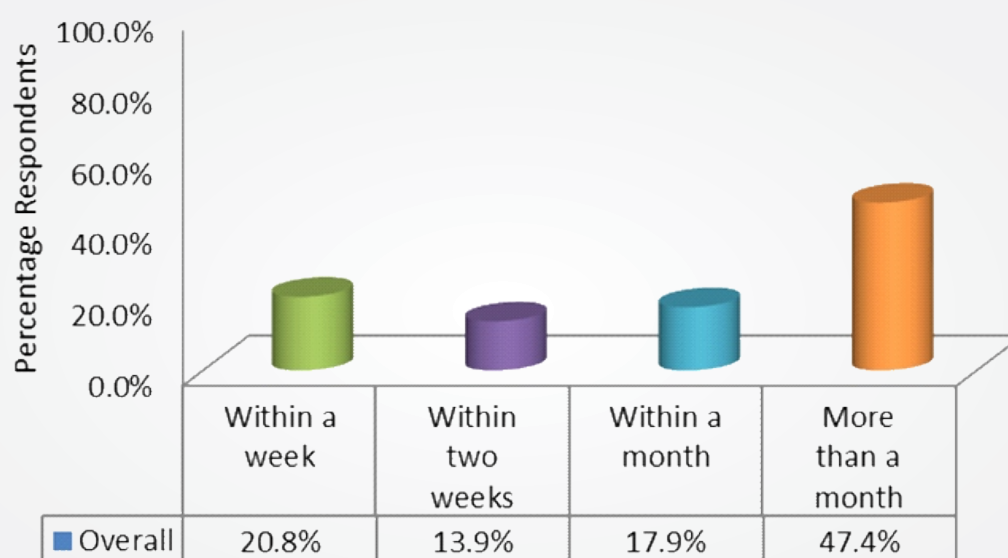


Figure 11: Survey Participants – Time After Floods HHs Received Assistance¹³

¹³ Exact question asked in the HH survey was "Within how many days after the floods occurred did the project provide assistance to your household?"

Islamic Relief ensured the provision of essential items to the affected population as soon as possible. Upon receiving the alerts, our pre-qualified vendors commenced the supply of essential items identified in the needs assessment to the affected population.

Male Participant – KII IRP Team

Speaking of delays, IRP consistently adhered to the timelines set for interventions without any shortcomings or negligence in their activities. All tasks were executed promptly; a minor delay of an hour or so was insignificant for us.

Male Participant – FGD Dadu Sindh

IRP's efforts received positive feedback from the beneficiaries in Sindh and other areas. During the data collection the community members showed gratitude for the IRP timely and required intervention.

An important finding was that although IRP was unable to reach flood-affected communities in Balochistan during the first week of the disaster, it was among the first organizations to provide assistance to these communities in Balochistan's flood-affected areas.

Islamic Relief did tremendous rehabilitation work in flood affected areas. IRP was one of the few organizations during the flood emergency that provided timely support to the vulnerable people.

Male Participant – KII Government Jaffarabad Balochistan

The flood led to a breakdown of transportation and communication services in the disaster-hit provinces especially in Sindh and Balochistan. Relief organizations faced immense difficulty in reaching affected areas due to floodwater blocking the routes, especially in the Dadu and Jaffarabad districts of Balochistan, where water persisted for up to 6 months. Hence, despite continuous efforts, many people remained inaccessible and were in urgent need of assistance. IRP deployed teams to assess and deliver relief items to accessible villages, but extensive delays occurred due to challenges in accessibility. Moreover, as discussed previously, disaster-struck communities were forced to change their locations to find shelter and food.

Therefore, in instances where IRP reached the communities after a while, multiple factors contributed to the delay. Challenges included the constant movement of displaced populations, which made tracking and assisting them difficult. As people kept changing locations, adapting relief efforts became necessary.

Nothing appeared to us [that was delayed], however, shelters were provided late because the [targeted intervention] area took long time to dry up.

Female Participant – FGD Tank KP

Box 3: Case Study: From Ruin to Resilience – Story of Survival

Irfan¹⁴ hails from the village of [.....], District Mirpur Khas. He supported his family as a local kulfi seller. Life was challenging, but Irfan managed to cover the expenses for his family with great difficulty.

In 2022, Irfan's life took a drastic turn when a flood swept through his village. The flood not only destroyed his home but also caused widespread destruction throughout the village. The community faced severe losses, with homes, belongings, and livelihoods destroyed in an instant.

With his house in ruins, Irfan and his family were left homeless. They had no choice but to live on the road, using old and torn clothes as makeshift tents. This period was incredibly tough for Irfan, as he struggled to keep his family safe and healthy in such harsh conditions.

After a few days of floods, relief arrived. Witnessing the dire conditions faced by Irfan and his family, Islamic Relief provided much-needed assistance in the form of a tent.

Receiving the tent was a turning point for Irfan and his family. It provided them with a sense of security and a decent shelter to sleep under. This intervention allowed Irfan's family to rest well and maintain their health, despite the surrounding devastation.

The IRP swiftly responded in the affected regions, providing aid to women, children, and disabled individuals. They ensured orderly distribution of cash, hygiene items, shelter, and solar kits, maintaining discipline throughout the process."

Male Participant – FGD Male Jaffarabad Balochistan

¹³ Original name replaced to ensure privacy

IRP's swift action was crucial in mitigating the immediate suffering of the vulnerable community of DI Khan. The timely intervention effectively addressed the urgent needs of the affected community. KII Project Manager Best Pak.

Male Participant – KII CSOs D I Khan KP

Box 4: Rebuilding Hope, A Case Study from Dadu

Abdul¹⁵, a resident of Goth [.....] in Dadu, where life changed drastically after the flood in August 2022. As a farmer and father of five, the flood submerged his village, leaving him and others homeless and desperate. The entire village was devastated. Abdul gathered his family, five goats, and other essential items onto a donkey cart and set out, eventually reaching a location where they remained stranded for several days. After enduring two challenging months in various tent cities, they finally returned to their village, only to discover that all the houses had collapsed. Belongings were destroyed: some were ruined by water, others washed away, and many broken due to the collapsed structures. Amidst the chaos, Islamic Relief Pakistan emerged as a beacon of hope and support.

Islamic Relief's response was quick and comprehensive. They immediately began addressing the most pressing needs starting with the reconstruction of homes. Their teams worked tirelessly, ensuring every family had a safe and resilient shelter. This not only provided physical security but also restored a sense of stability and dignity. Besides housing, Islamic Relief focused on holistic recovery efforts. They established sanitation facilities, distributed essential health and hygiene supplies, and provided farming tools and seeds to help revive livelihoods.

The efforts went beyond material support. Islamic Relief engaged with community members directly, listening to concerns and involving them in decision-making processes. This inclusive approach not only strengthened trust but also ensured that their interventions were tailored to specific needs and the local context.

3.3. People Affected by Crisis – Are Better Prepared and More Resilient

The importance of empowering individuals and communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from crises is a crucial aspect of effective and impactful relief efforts. This principle of the CHS highlights the need for proactive measures that enhance the preparedness and resilience of those affected by disasters, conflicts, or other emergencies. Overall, disaster preparedness and resilience means developing long-term strategies that enable communities to anticipate potential risks and mitigate their impacts. This includes training in disaster risk reduction, implementing early warning systems, and fostering sustainable livelihoods that can endure shocks. For example, IRP under the RISE project focused on training local community members in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emergency response.

¹⁵ Original name replaced to ensure privacy

Furthermore, resilience is about building the capacity to bounce back from adversity, ensuring that affected populations can maintain or quickly restore their well-being. For instance, the RAIR project by IRP focused on sustainable livelihoods and the promotion of micro-entrepreneurship. During the project, several beneficiaries were provided business management, therefore, equipping them with essential business skills and knowledge.

Box 5: Case Study: Mai Bagul's Journey with Islamic Relief

Mai¹⁶, a 32-year-old woman, faced a severe test of resilience amidst the devastating flood of 2022. The floodwaters destroyed Mai's cultivated crop, which was her primary source of livelihood, and left her home partially damaged. The once-vibrant village was now covered in despair, with uncertainty clouding the future for Mai and other villagers.

During these difficult times, Islamic Relief's Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) program brought a ray of hope. The intervention designed to provide immediate financial relief to flood-affected families, offered Mai a crucial lifeline, a cash grant of 25,000 rupees. With determination and wisdom, Mai decided to invest 18,000 rupees in purchasing a sewing machine, a tool that she believed could transform her fortunes. The remaining funds were wisely allocated towards purchasing other items including ribbons, buttons, thread reels, and other essentials, turning her modest home into a bustling workshop.

As a result, Mai's skills as a seamstress flourished. She started tailoring clothes for the women in her village, soon gaining a reputation for her meticulous work and creative designs. Word of her talent spread quickly, and soon, she became sought for custom dresses, bridal outfits, and everyday wear. Her monthly earnings increased to 5,000 rupees, providing her with a stable income and a renewed sense of purpose.

Grateful for the support she received, Mai expressed her heartfelt thanks to Islamic Relief for this opportunity. Islamic relief provided her with hope and the opportunity to rebuild during the toughest of times. Mai's journey demonstrates the transformative effect of assistance programs like MPCA, which go beyond financial aid to offer a lifeline to those in need, empowering them to create brighter futures for themselves and their communities. Mai Bagul's story stands as a testament to resilience, resourcefulness, and the profound impact of humanitarian assistance in rebuilding lives and restoring hope.

In another instance, to promote sustainable livelihoods for beneficiary HHs, IRP under the "Distribution of 6-month pregnant Kundi buffaloes to selected poor flood affected HHs in District Dadu-Sindh" project distributed pregnant Kundi buffaloes. This intervention was not only aimed at meeting the immediate nutritional needs (in terms of supply of milk) but also enabled them to sell surplus milk, generating additional income. The buffaloes, being pregnant, ensured the future growth of livestock. The offspring of the buffaloes could be raised or sold, supporting the families' financial resilience. This project activity was highly appreciated by the beneficiary HHs in Dadu. An FGD participant shared her views on this project below.

¹⁶ Original name removed to ensure privacy

Islamic Relief not only supplied us with necessities and household items but also empowered us by offering sustainable livelihood opportunities such as providing animals and establishing small businesses. Their efforts were instrumental in enhancing our living conditions and preparing us for a more resilient future.

Female Participant – FGD Dadu Sindh

Box 6: Rebuilding Lives: Islamic Relief's Impact on Asim's¹⁷ Family After the Flood 2022 - Dadu

Asim and his family lived in the small village of [...] in District Dadu. As a labourer with five sons, two daughters, and a wife, Asim's life was centred around managing his family and supporting their livelihood. However, in 2022, a devastating flood struck their village, destroying their home and belongings. This made it extremely difficult for them to maintain their daily routines.

Asim's income, which was already minimal, was used mainly for covering daily expenses. The flood not only destroyed their home but also wiped out their means of earning a living. Without an immediate source of income, rebuilding their home and acquiring essential items became a significant challenge.

Islamic Relief stepped in to support Asim and his family. The assistance provided by Islamic Relief was comprehensive and designed to meet both their immediate and long-term needs. They offered shelter to the family, ensuring they had a safe place to live. Additionally, Islamic Relief supplied essential items such as blankets, utensils, solar panels, and livestock. This support helped the family regain a level of normalcy and comfort in their daily lives. According to Asim, "Islamic Relief has restored our whole life and did not just leave us behind with only one form of assistance, which is often the case." The help from Islamic Relief enabled them not only to recover from the immediate impact of the floods but also to build resilience against future hardships.

Another aspect was the utilization of local knowledge to design culture specific relief programmes for the beneficiary communities. An example of this was the establishment of O&M Committees and GRCs at the sub-project level to foster local participation and ownership. Training sessions were conducted for committee members to educate them on their roles and responsibilities, thereby building local capacity and enabling local decision-making.

Furthermore, to strengthen local capacities, IRP prioritised purchasing materials for the intervention from local markets, as applicable. This benefited the local economy, market and livelihood of the communities. Furthermore, engaging local vendors, and skilled and unskilled labour in the construction process helped in creating employment opportunities for the local community.

¹⁷ Original name removed to ensure privacy

The Islamic Relief team helped us resettle in the villages. Their assistance significantly increased our resilience as they constructed houses for us, provided agricultural supplies, established small businesses, built washrooms, and spread awareness about health and hygiene practices.

Male Participant – FGD Dadu Sindh

With the above background, under the beneficiary HH survey, the beneficiaries were asked about the degree to which the project activities contributed to their level of preparedness for future disasters. The graph below illustrates the gathered responses which show that almost 89.3% of the respondents felt that the projects implemented by IRP were either fully or partially effective in preparing their communities for future emergencies. This demonstrates a positive response towards the project activities and their contribution towards increasing the resilience of the communities.

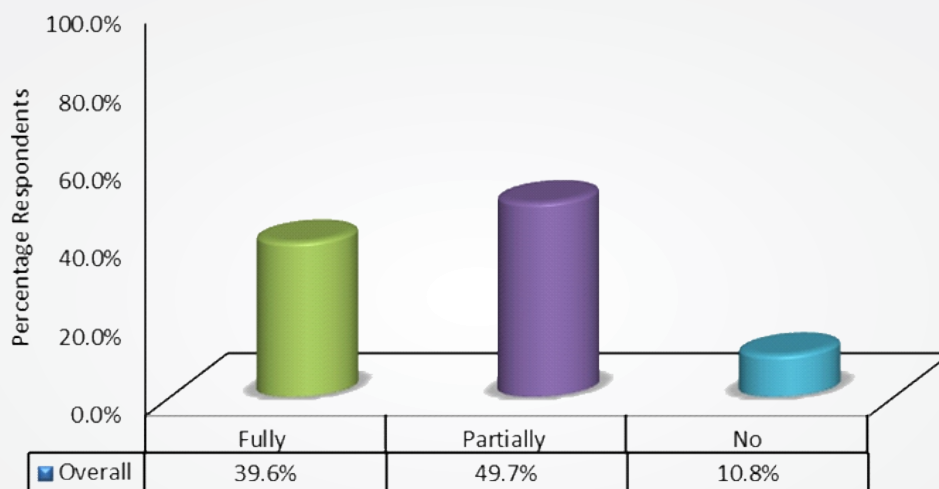


Figure 12: Survey Participants – Project Helped Communities to Deal with Future Emergencies¹⁸

¹⁸ Exact question asked in the HH survey was “Have the project activities helped your communities to deal with future emergencies?”

Box 7: Darkness to Light, A Case Study from Naseerabad

Ahmed¹⁹, a farmer residing in [...] village, District Naseerabad, faced severe challenges during the devastating 2022 floods. The disaster destroyed his home, devastated his agricultural livelihood, and tragically lost one of his buffaloes, leaving his family in dire circumstances.

With limited resources, Ahmed and his family struggled to meet basic requirements. During the dire and critical times, Islamic Relief assessed the community's needs and implemented targeted interventions. Following the need assessment, Islamic Relief distributed solar kits to families affected by the floods. Ahmed's family received a solar panel, a fan, and a battery, crucial for coping with the sweltering summer conditions and enabling his children to study after dark.

The impact of these interventions was transformative. The solar kit not only brought immediate relief but also restored a sense of normalcy and hope to Ahmed's family and the entire village. Through, this support Ahmed's, children were able to continue studying after sunset and also facilitated the charging of essential devices.



Figure 13: IRP Provided Solar Panel

¹⁹ Original name removed to ensure privacy

Box 8: Case study, from Devastation to Resilience

In 2022, Khan²⁰, a dedicated truck driver residing in district Tank, faced a crisis when devastating floods swept away his home, leaving them homeless and vulnerable. In the middle of this devastation, IRP provided much needed support. IRP responded quickly and effectively to their urgent needs, providing crucial support which included the construction of a sturdy shelter to ensure safety and security for Khan's family of eight including two members with disabilities. To improve access to sanitation and hygiene, Islamic Relief installed a latrine, addressing critical health concerns in the aftermath of the disaster.

With a safe shelter in place, Khan was able to return to his truck driving business. Through IRP assistance, Khan was able to have a stable source of income, enabling him to support his family's needs and even help others in his community who were affected by the disaster.

Today, Khan's family has made remarkable progress towards recovery. The children have returned to school, ensuring continuity in their education and a brighter future. Regular access to medical care has been established for family members with disabilities, significantly improving their well-being and quality of life.

3.4. People Affected by Crisis - Access Support that Does Not Harm People or Environment

A new dimension that has emerged after the recurring natural disasters is the connection between disasters and climate change. Therefore, IRP is also now focusing on the bigger picture for example; the impact of climate change and the level of awareness of the community members is a vital component of need assessment reports of IRP projects.

At IRP environmental aspects have been given critical consideration while designing, planning and executing the floods 2022 response adhering to Do No Harm to the local environment. For example, in KP, the local topographic aspects and environmental hazard repercussions have been taken care of in the project design in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). For the similar purpose (environment), IRP carried out coordination with the key relevant departments e.g. irrigation and soil conservation departments, district administrations, EPA and flood irrigation division. Overall, IRP made sure to forge alliances and network with environmental groups and provincial networks at the local level to foster climate-smart land and water use practices, especially for the mitigation of floods through comprehensive watershed management. In this respect, IRP's flagship advocacy campaign 'Voices organised for Climate Change Advocacy & Lobbying -VOCAL), has been integrated with the interventions to raise awareness, build local capacities, and prepare local communities and stakeholders to join voices for environmental hazards, climate change impacts and build resilience. With the primary objective of minimising the environmental impact of carbon footprints arising out of project activities, the local community, especially youth, is being mobilised to pay attention to environmentally friendly community initiatives, e.g., tree plantation, deforestation and discouraging the use of plastic, etc.

²⁰ Original name removed to ensure privacy

Minimizing Environmental Impact



Figure 14: IRP Efforts in Minimizing Interventions Environmental Impact

As discussed above, climate change is a significant aspect of IRP's work in Pakistan and therefore, it is well aware of the necessity to ensure that any project activity implemented by the organization should be environmentally friendly. As a result, IRP has conducted regular awareness sessions to educate and mobilize communities. Its efforts include behavioural change interventions as part of IRP's comprehensive approach to addressing climate change. For instance, IRP has led the effort to consciously avoid providing (plastic) bottled water (to minimize plastic use) to community members and instead offers filtered water, to mitigate the environmental impact of plastic as it is not biodegradable (the type of plastic used for storing water) and creates hazards such as clogging drains/waterways. In areas where the organisation is involved in shelter construction and response efforts, IRP encouraged tree plantation to enhance local environmental conditions. For the same reason, solar kits were also provided to beneficiary HHs so that their needs are met in a manner which does not have negative impacts on the environment such as less use of burning wood.



In response to the flood crisis, IRP delivered critical assistance which not only met the community's basic needs but also prepared them to withstand future challenges. Each individual received essential support including solar kits and financial assistance equipping them with resources to thrive and rebuild.

Male Participant – FGD Jaffarabad Balochistan

3.5. People Affected by Crisis – Can Safely Report Concerns and Complaints

Ensuring that people and communities can safely report concerns and complaints and have them addressed is a fundamental principle in humanitarian work. This principle revolves around creating a trusted, transparent, and accessible system for beneficiaries to voice their grievances and concerns without fear of retaliation or discrimination. IRP has established mechanisms for complaint handling and community feedback. While complaint handling addresses issues directly, IRP feedback mechanisms involve openly reviewing and integrating received feedback into IRP systems.



A senior MEAL person has been designated in each province to receive feedback, take up with the concerned team and get back to the communities. All the focal points are led and coordinated by a central complaint and feedback focal point. The complaints are registered in the complaint logs and automatically analysed through graphical representation in the same sheet. The complaints are consolidated, reviewed, analysed and then shared with the country management team along with the IRW's governance team.

Male Participant – IRP Team

A formal grievance redressal mechanism is put in place to address any complaints or issues raised by community members. This mechanism ensures transparency and accountability in handling grievances.

According to the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework, IRP has an accountability, complaints, feedback and suggestion system aligned with the CHS. From the outset of the project, IRP prioritised clear communication with the target population and relevant stakeholders, using a mix of public announcements, visibility materials and documentation. IRP ensured that the affected community and key representatives were aware of what IRP was delivering to the targeted communities. IRP project teams engaged with the communities to regularly brief and explain them the various means of complaints and feedback, including a dedicated phone number, 0345-8535XXX,²¹ and email address complaints@irworldwide.org. The project teams had been displaying dedicated CRM visibility banners during the community-based interactions to inform the maximum number of right-holders and stakeholders about their rights. MEAL staff has also been disseminating information to the targeted stakeholders to register their feedback and complaints.

²¹ Last few digits of the contact number removed to ensure privacy



Figure 15: IRP Installed Complaint Box and Awareness Banner

3.5.1 Complaints Registration

The establishment of easily accessible multiple channels for reporting to use, such as hotlines, suggestion boxes, community meetings, or digital platforms is essential. These channels should be designed to accommodate various literacy levels, languages, and technological access to ensure inclusivity. Anonymity options should be provided to protect the identities of those who might fear repercussions for speaking out. For example, during the UNDP funded Flood Recovery Programme, IRP established a grievance redressal mechanism to ensure that complaints from the affected population were heard and addressed promptly. This included setting up hotlines and feedback boxes to collect and respond to community grievances. In another example, the IRP team under the RAPID II project conducted sessions with GRC members to ensure the grievance redressal mechanism were accessible and responsive to the community's needs, particularly those of women and PWDs. These sessions aimed to address complaints in a timely and culturally sensitive manner, ensuring that all grievances are handled. The sessions also provided detailed and easily understandable information on feedback mechanisms and complaint boxes. For instance, phone numbers of the relevant IRP staff were listed on the complaint boxes along with a list of instructions.

The graph below illustrates the responses of individuals regarding whether project staff provided information on how to register complaints about project implementation issues.

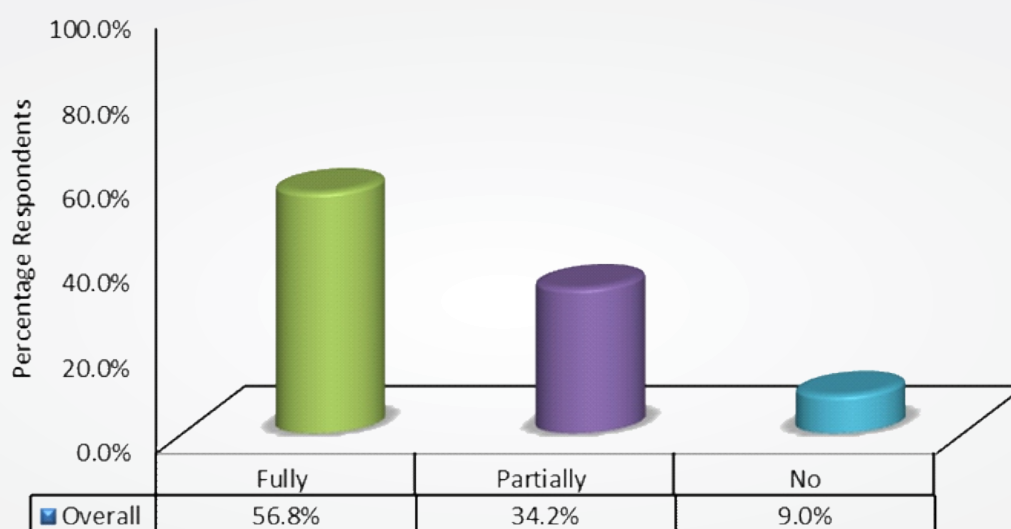


Figure 16: Survey Participants – IRP Staff Provided Information on Registering Complaints²²

The results indicate that a majority of respondents, 91.0%, reported that they were fully or partially informed about the complaint registration process. Only a small percentage of respondents, 9.0%, stated that they were not provided with any information on how to register complaints. This distribution suggests that while the majority of the project staff successfully communicated the complaint registration process, there remains a notable portion of the population that either received incomplete information or none at all, highlighting an area for potential improvement in communication and transparency.

Feedback Mechanism

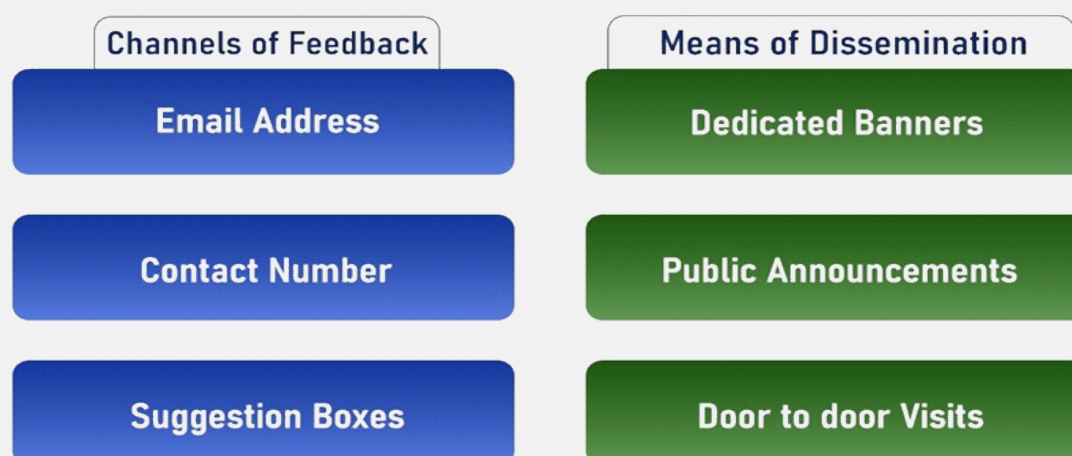


Figure 17: IRP Community Feedback Mechanism Key Features

²² Exact question asked in the HH survey was "Has the project staff provided information on how to register complaints regarding project implementation issues?"

The community members shared their insights on the accessibility of the complaint procedure during the FGDs conducted under this learning review.



Community feedback was an essential part of the project. Islamic Relief organized meetings in our village where they informed us about the complaint mechanisms in case of any difficulties or issues. They provided complaint boxes, mobile numbers and emails.

Female Participant – FGD Mirpurkhas Sindh

The graph below depicts the ease of use of methods for registering complaints as perceived by the respondents.

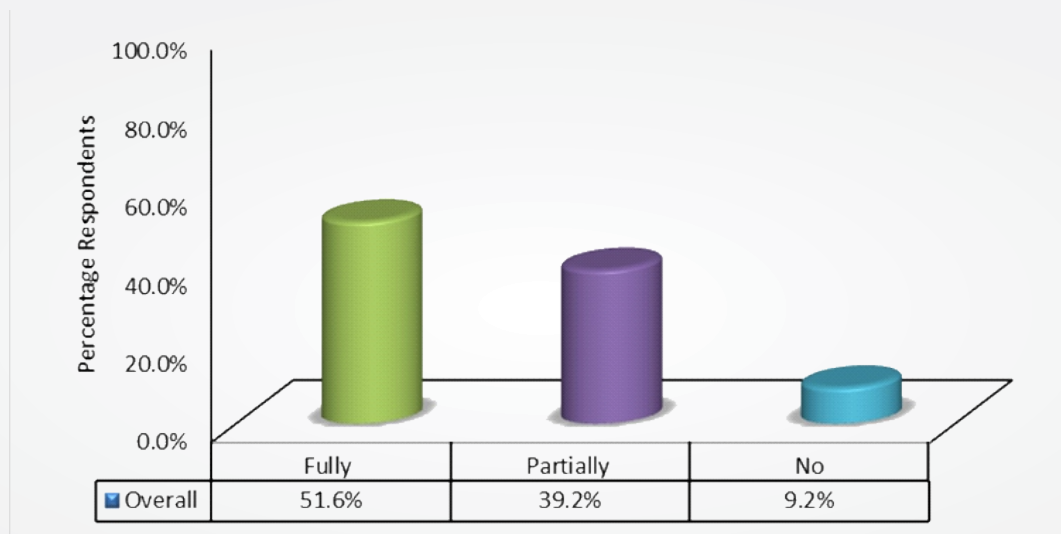


Figure 18: Survey Participants – Methods for Registering Complaints were Easy to Use²³

A majority, 51.6%, reported that the methods were fully easy to use, indicating that over half of the community found the complaint registration process straightforward and accessible. Additionally, 39.2% of respondents felt that the methods were partially easy to use, suggesting that while they encountered some difficulties, the process was still manageable for a significant portion of the population. However, 9.2% of respondents found the methods not easy to use, highlighting a minority who struggled with the complaint registration process. This analysis suggests that while the overall system for registering complaints is generally effective, there is room for improvement to make it more user-friendly and accessible to all community members through more community consultations.

²³ Exact question asked in the HH survey was "Were the methods for registering complaints easy to use?"

Lock boxes containing phone numbers for IRP feedback are installed; this provides a means for community input. Additionally, the committee register outlines the process for providing feedback on staff behaviour. IRP ensures that information regarding feedback mechanisms is shared in every meeting.

Male Participant – FGD D I Khan KP

IRP's approach to consultations and handling complaints was excellent. They had set up suggestion boxes, provided mobile numbers, and shared the head office's email address, which was very effective.

Male Participant – KII Government Dadu Sindh

3.5.2 Response Time to Complaints

The graph illustrates the response time from the project after community members registered a complaint.

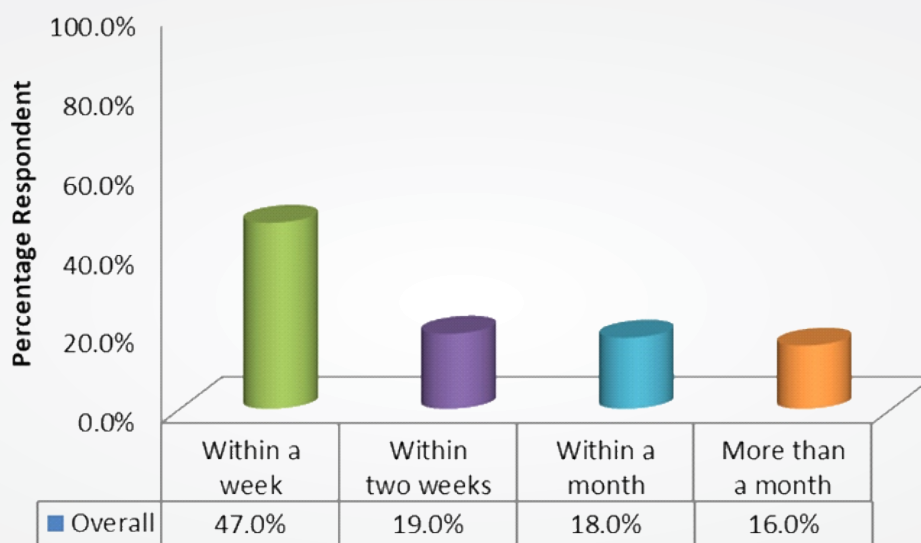


Figure 19: Survey Participants – Complaint Response Time from IRP²⁴

²⁴ Exact question asked in the HH survey was "Within how many days did the community receive a response from the project after registering a complaint?"

The data reveals that 47.0% of respondents received a response within a week, indicating a prompt reaction for a notable portion of the community. Another, 19.0% received a response within two weeks, 18.0% within a month, and 16.0% in more than a month. However, it is important to note that the above graph is based on responses of 42.0% who were aware of the response time. The rest 58.0% were not aware of the complaint response time, suggesting a lack of communication or awareness about the complaint resolution process. This indicates a gap in the feedback and communication mechanisms, requiring an efficient system to inform and assure the community about the handling and resolution of their complaints.



There were specific timeframes for investigating issues affecting the population and addressing any complaints received. We were previously educated during sessions on complaint mechanisms, and we are aware of these procedures.

Male Participant – FGD Mirpurkhas Sindh



The community is aware of the feedback mechanism but didn't know about the timeframe for investigation and resolution of complaints.

Male Participant – FGD D I Khan KP

3.6. People Affected by Crisis – Access Coordinated and Complementary Support

Ensuring that people and communities access coordinated and complementary support requires a multifaceted approach that involves collaboration with various stakeholders.

3.6.1 Coordination within IRP Through Decentralized Decision Making

One of IRP's notable approach during this flood event was the organization's decentralized decision-making process. Rather than making decisions solely in the main offices away from the field, IRP engaged field operations extensively. IRP staff coordinated through phone calls, WhatsApp, and virtual meetings to ensure swift decision-making and prompt action. This agile and decentralized approach has provided IRP with an innovative framework for rapid response for future challenges. Similarly, on the internal coordination front, IR International Programme Directors held daily meetings for several months, strategizing finances and securing global support. This involved close coordination with regional finance, supply chain, and program teams over an extended period, demonstrating a unique and sustained cycle of effort and adaptation throughout the response phase.

3.6.2 Coordination with relevant stakeholders and locally-led actions

Coordination with relevant stakeholders and support for locally-led actions are crucial to ensure an effective response. Hence, recognizing the importance of coordinating relief efforts with local governmental and non-governmental organizations, IRP worked closely with other stakeholders including government and sectoral working groups. The close liaison with the government ensured comparatively easy access to different parts of the flood-affected areas as the government removed No Objection Certificate (NOC) requirements for the NGOs involved in the humanitarian response which also benefited IRP relief efforts. Similarly, IRP worked closely with the government to ensure that access could be established to flood-affected locations, even through non-traditional means, which were out of reach and needed assistance. For example, this included working closely with respective government departments to transport humanitarian assistance through boats and helicopters.



[organization name]²⁵ and IRP have done interventions at same UCs and we have collaborated with each other to support the most vulnerables.

Male Participant – KII CSOs Jaffarabad Balochistan

In instances administrative challenges complicated the relief efforts such as protests against the administration, delays in project approval, and the inclusion of areas in the flood-affected lists. Therefore, field level coordination was of utmost importance to deliver interventions. For this purpose, IRP carried out strong field level coordination with the respective authorities and civil society. For example, under the RAPID II project, the IRP team held district-level meetings with local authorities and stakeholders, including the Additional Deputy Commissioner and Executive Engineer of Irrigation. Similarly, in another project, IRP collaborated with the Livestock & Dairy Development Department to ensure a coordinated effort in distributing the buffaloes. These meetings ensured that project activities were well-coordinated with local efforts and complemented existing initiatives by local authorities and other civil society organizations, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the humanitarian response.

Overall, and particularly on the National and Provincial level, the role of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and administration was crucial, but their efforts were hampered by the lack of pre-existing data for effective planning. Therefore, a gap in the government data was identified as a key challenge. This data gap hindered the ability to plan and respond efficiently to disasters. IRP emphasized the importance of bridging this gap to improve future disaster responses. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) played a vital role in leading cluster/sectoral working group data management, underscoring the reliance of humanitarian organizations for data during disasters. It is important to note there were two types of data: cluster or sectoral working group data led by UNOCHA and government data. Initially, UNOCHA took the lead, supporting the government. However, there was a gap when UNOCHA was not providing updates. Furthermore, collaborating with other institutions, such as

²⁵ Name of the organization removed to ensure privacy

the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF) was important for sector coordination as IRP and other humanitarian organizations shared progress using this platform.

On the other hand, though the scale of floods 2022 surpassed that of 2010, yet the humanitarian response wasn't commensurate with previous efforts. Donor agencies and international responders faced challenges due to inadequate information sharing and insufficient media coverage. Similarly, though some media reported damages, gathering precise data such as the number affected and types of damages incurred took time and delayed comprehensive reporting. In this pre-text, IRP played a crucial role in raising awareness through prominent media channels like BBC, CNN, and other major outlets, ensuring global attention to the floods 2022 disaster.



Figure 20: Coordination with key stakeholders

Overall, by maintaining close connections with respective authorities and other humanitarian actors, IRP ensured that its response interventions aligned with the Pakistan's early humanitarian appeal. For example, in response to local needs, IRP extended the early response period by six months, making significant adjustments and improvements to the IRP dynamic document. Furthermore, IRP prepared a comprehensive humanitarian response plan, shifting focus from response to recovery and rehabilitation.

The way they coordinate, respond and intervene is quite good. They always consult district administration for the selection of the area because district administration knows the dynamics of the area.

Male Participant – KII Government Mirpurkhas Sindh

To conclude, both at the provincial and district levels, IRP has established strong linkages and an effective coordination mechanism with government entities, including the Relief Rehabilitation & Settlement Department (RR&SD), Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), government line departments including social welfare, education, health, local government, Rescue 1122 and public health engineering departments, national and International NGOs, UN-Agencies, PHF, Protection, WASH and FSL working groups and district administrations. This has helped IRP with effective information sharing, creating synergies and avoiding duplication of response efforts with relevant stakeholders. Overall, IRP's coordination for the floods 2022 response has been at all levels of government, including national, provincial, and district, as well as with other organisations through working groups.

3.7. People Affected by Crisis – Support Adapted Based on Feedback

A crucial aspect of CHS Commitment 7 is fostering a culture of learning within organizations. This involves creating an environment where staff are encouraged to reflect on their experiences, share insights, and learn from both successes and challenges. Regular training, workshops, and learning sessions can facilitate this process, ensuring that knowledge is continuously updated and disseminated across the organization. To ensure learning and adaptations, besides community inputs IRP also organized reflection/ lesson learned workshops such as under the IRP RAPID II project and UNDP funded Flood Recovery Programme. These workshops involved a diverse stakeholder. The workshops were designed to evaluate the response, gather insights, and integrate them into future planning.



Islamic Relief conducted a meeting where we were actively involved in discussing our needs. They listened attentively and noted our requirements. Subsequently, they diligently worked to address these needs and provided us with the necessary support and resources tailored to our specific circumstances.

Female Participant – FGD Dadu Sindh



“IRP organized meetings weekly or sometimes once a month where we were able to express our concerns and questions regarding the project.”

Male Participant – FGD Mirpurkhas Sindh

In addition to the monitoring of the interventions by the IRP MEAL team through Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM), technical experts provided inputs to ensure activities were conducted as per communities need. Institutional donors such as the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) and ShelterBox, a UK-based organization, visited IRP intervention areas to witness the interventions. High-profile visits, such as from the Canadian Ambassador, also played a significant role in

ensuring the quality of the interventions. Feedback from PDMs, community inputs, and other stakeholders was systematically incorporated into IRP's response and recovery efforts. By integrating insights from various sources, IRP ensures that its actions and methods are consistently refined. As a result, for instance, IRP cash transfer programming transitioned from conventional methods to cashless banking. IRP adapted its interventions based on feedback received from the field. Therefore, to meet the immediate needs of the disaster-struck communities IRP's finance, logistics, and programme teams recognized the emerging importance of cashless banking. However, a major challenge was the lack of access to banking systems among the targeted population. Consequently, IRP shifted towards banking solutions, such as transferring funds via JazzCash, enabling swift assistance. However, the IRP received feedback that in some cases the retailers handling the cash grants were charging a fee from the beneficiaries which they were not supposed to charge. Based on this feedback from the Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) team, IRP cashless banking service providers were instructed to enforce strict guidelines on retailers to prevent such situations from occurring. Based on these stringent measures, some retailers' licenses were also revoked. This showcases the organization's commitment to utilizing feedback from the field to improve the project and the assistance it provides to the beneficiaries.

Another example includes the improvement in the design of the shelter provided in Dadu after insights and data from the field. Initially, IRP proposed Low-Cost Zero Carbon shelters, also known as Lari Green Shelters, for the affected areas. However, upon realizing that the design is not suitable, IRP adapted the shelter design to better meet the local needs in real time, demonstrating IRP's commitment to responsive and effective emergency response interventions. For example, the IRP shelter project initially provided temporary shelters but later upgraded to more durable tents. These tents were equipped with essential items like tents, stoves, lights, and water purifiers. Moreover, the tents were designed to address seasonal needs, such as providing cooling during the summer. These efforts were supported by collaboration with vendors like ShelterBox, who provided valuable insights and adapted designs based on local needs.



Figure 21: IRP Provided Shelter

The graph below provides insights into how effectively the project adjusted its activities to align with the needs of individual HHs. According to the data, 40.1% of respondents felt that the project fully changed its activities to match their HH needs, indicating a substantial portion of the community experienced a high level of responsiveness and customization in the relief efforts. Additionally, 51.6% of respondents reported that the project partially adjusted its activities, suggesting that while some of their needs were met, there were still areas that required further alignment. Only 8.3% of respondents felt that the project did not change its activities at all to match their HH needs, highlighting a small segment of the population whose specific requirements were not addressed. Overall, the majority of respondents perceived a positive and adaptable approach from IRP.



Figure 22: Survey Participants – Project Adapted its Activities²⁶

The thoughts and opinions shared by community members in FGDs corroborate with the above findings. Most felt that their feedback was valued and incorporated into the project activities. Below is a quote from an FGD conducted in Dera Ismail Khan.

“We felt heard and included in decision-making processes. IRP adjusts strategies according to community needs and opinions. Every individual has the right to access information, ensuring that support is tailored and adapted based on community feedback.”

Male Participant – FGD D I Khan KP

²⁶ Exact question asked in the HH survey was “How much did the project change its activities to match with the needs of your household?”

Despite the overwhelming positive response in this aspect, there were a few community members who felt that there should have been more consultations with the locals and that due to a lack of input from the community; their needs were not fully met. Below is a quote from an FGD conducted in Jaffarabad, Balochistan.



“Throughout the process, the community was not consulted and included in decision-making. Their input was disregarded. As a result, the support provided failed to address our needs.”

Male Participant – FGD Jaffarabad Balochistan

This demonstrates that there is room for improvement in this area. Many reasons could account for this including a lack of resources to gather comprehensive data from the community due to limited access and time. If the affected community feels that their feedback is not being taken seriously or that there is no visible change resulting from their input, they may become disillusioned and less likely to participate in future feedback initiatives. This can create a cycle of disengagement where valuable insights are lost.

3.8. People Affected by Crisis – Interaction with Respectful, Competent and Well-managed Staff

Respectful interactions are fundamental, as they involve treating every individual with dignity regardless of their background or situation. This respectful approach fosters trust, essential for cooperation and effective aid delivery. Competent humanitarian workers are trained not only in technical aspects of aid but also in cultural sensitivity, communication, and ethical conduct.

For this purpose, IRP established a Well Being/Safeguarding Team in 2019 to ensure safeguarding policy rollout across Pakistan to sensitize staff, vendors, interns, and volunteers regarding safeguarding commitments and the Code of Conduct. Moreover, IRP interventions are guided by the global strategy (a strategy also contextualized in Pakistan context) to ensure adherence to technical standards in alignment with minimum standards of inclusion, protection and gender justice/ GBV policies, FSL, WASH etc. For example, considering the cultural constraints, separate men and women COs were established/reactivated in each targeted village to ensure men, women, and people at risk have equal and quick access to aid, and have equal say in decision making. These COs were oriented on IRP policies and procedures such as protection policies; and were engaged in developing beneficiaries' selection criteria; beneficiary identification and confirmation. To further strengthen these efforts, IRP can consider continuous capacity building for CO's members on safeguarding principles and inclusive practices.

3.8.1 Adherence to a code of conduct

IRP has established a code of conduct that sets clear expectations for behaviour and outlines unacceptable practices. This code of conduct is integral to fostering a safe, respectful, and accountable working environment.²⁷ The IRP code of conduct prohibits any

²⁷ <https://islamic-relief.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/External-IRW-Safeguarding-Policy-August-2020-Final-2.pdf>

form of exploitation, abuse, harassment, or discrimination. This means that all staff and volunteers are expected to treat beneficiaries, colleagues, and community members with dignity and respect, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, or socio-economic status. Any behaviour that undermines this principle, such as verbal or physical harassment, discriminatory practices, or any form of abuse, is strictly forbidden. Moreover, the conduct explicitly forbids the misuse of resources. This includes financial resources, materials, and any assets entrusted to the organization for humanitarian response and/or development interventions. Staff and volunteers are expected to use these resources responsibly and transparently, ensuring that they are directed towards their intended purposes and used most efficiently and effectively. Misuse of resources undermines the organization's mission but also erodes trust with donors, beneficiaries, and the wider community.

To ensure adherence to the code of conduct, IRP provides staff and volunteers trainings upon joining the organization. This training covers the principles and expectations outlined in the conduct, along with real-life scenarios to help individuals understand how to apply these principles in their daily work. Regular refresher and updates ensure that everyone remains aware of their responsibilities and any changes to the code. The community members were also satisfied with the IRP staff's adherence to appropriate and ethical conduct.



When it comes to their code of conduct, the staff of Islamic Relief demonstrated exceptional professionalism. They were morally upright individuals who consistently prioritized our community's welfare.

Male Participant – FGD Dadu Sindh



IRP staff always respected our privacy by engaging with committee members during their initial visits to the village. All staff members exhibited politeness and honesty in their interactions. Their communication skills were commendable, and their ethical conduct left a lasting positive impression on us.

Male Participant – FGD Naseerabad Balochistan



“The whole community is aware of IRP values, code of conduct and principles they follow. They [IRP] are protecting the rights of beneficiaries....”

Male Participant – FGD D I Khan KP

Furthermore, IRP has established reporting mechanisms for any violations of the code of conduct. These mechanisms are designed to be accessible and confidential, encouraging staff and volunteers to report any concerns or incidents without fear of retaliation.

“In every village we visited with the Islamic Relief staff, people spoke very highly of them. Their staff was compassionate and treated people with great respect. Their approach to work was transparent and clear.”

Male Participant – KII Government Dadu Sindh

“IRP team informed us about the complaint mechanism. However, we never needed to use it because the staff's conduct and behavior were exemplary. They were consistently supportive and helpful.”

Male Participant – FGD D I Khan KP

Knowledge of the local area is equally important. Staff and volunteers who are familiar with the local culture, language, and geography can navigate challenges more effectively and communicate more efficiently with beneficiaries. This local insight helps in understanding the cultural norms and respecting them.

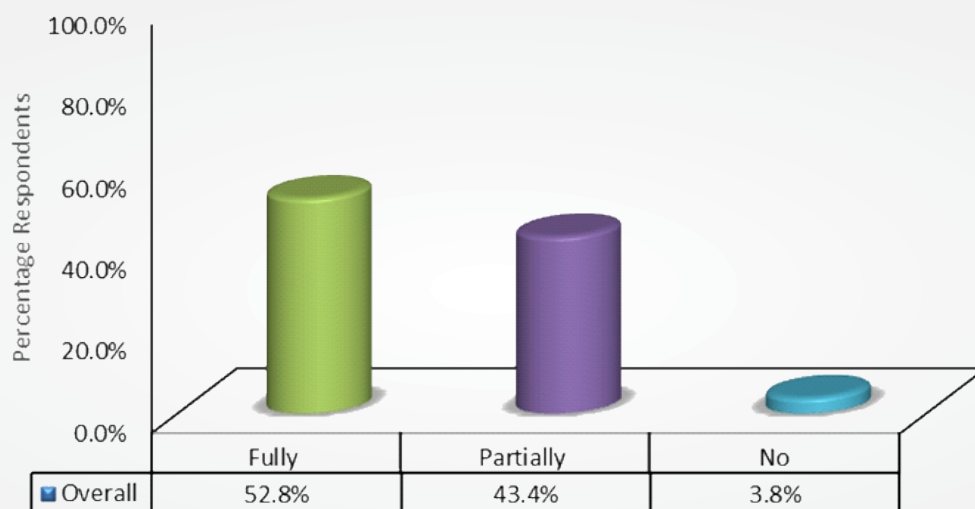


Figure 23: Survey Participants – Project Staff had Local Context Understanding²⁸

²⁸ Exact question asked in the HH survey was “Did the project staff have experience about the local area?”

The graph illustrates that a majority of respondents, 52.8%, believe the project staff were fully experienced with the local area, indicating a strong confidence in the staff's comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the local context. Additionally, 43.4% of respondents felt the staff had partial experience, suggesting that while many staff members were familiar with the local conditions, there were some gaps in their knowledge. Only 3.8% of respondents indicated that the staff had no experience with the local area, reflecting positively on the overall preparedness of the project team. Overall, the data suggests a generally positive perception of the project staff's local area experience, with most respondents recognizing a significant level of familiarity and competence, though there is room for improvement in achieving full familiarity for all staff members.

3.8.2 The presence of an inclusive and safe working environment

For effective humanitarian work, it is integral to have diversity and an inclusive working environment. A diverse team brings a wide range of perspectives, skills, and experiences, which enhances problem-solving and innovation. Diversity also fosters cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness, crucial for building trust and rapport with the communities being served. For example, IRP ensured that women staff were present to interact with women community members at the field level, promoting gender equality and diversity within the team. Moreover, IRP has team members from various religions, including Hinduism, who have played leadership roles in IRP projects. While disability inclusion is a fundamental part of IRP culture, leadership representation at the national level remains a work in progress. Nevertheless, the IRP strategic group of 15-20 members includes women leading teams in media, child protection, and climate change initiatives. Therefore, more leadership roles need to be occupied by people belonging to minority groups for better representation and inclusion.

This diversification in the IRP team also ensures that different segments such as women, minorities, PWDs etc. of the communities are included in the project interventions and treated with respect. During the learning review data collection areas interaction with diverse women community members reassures that they felt safe and comfortable sharing their issues with the women staff members.

3.9. People Affected by Crisis - Can Expect Ethical and Responsible Management of Resources

People and communities can expect that resources are managed ethically and responsibly in humanitarian operations. This principle is fundamental to maintaining trust and ensuring that aid reaches those who need it most. Humanitarian organizations must ensure that all financial, material, and human resources are used solely for their intended purposes and that every action taken is in the best interest of the affected populations. This includes organizations having rigorous financial oversight, regular audits, and clear reporting to stakeholders, including donors and beneficiaries.

Adhering to recognized good financial practices means implementing robust internal controls to prevent fraud, corruption, and financial mismanagement. This includes conducting regular audits, both internal and external, to scrutinize financial activities and identify any irregularities or areas for improvement. It also involves establishing clear procurement policies to ensure that all purchases are necessary, cost-effective, and procured in a manner that is fair and transparent. Hence, rigorous financial management and regular audits were an integral part of IRP's to guarantee that resources were used responsibly. This included transparent reporting and accountability mechanisms to maintain the integrity of the humanitarian response.

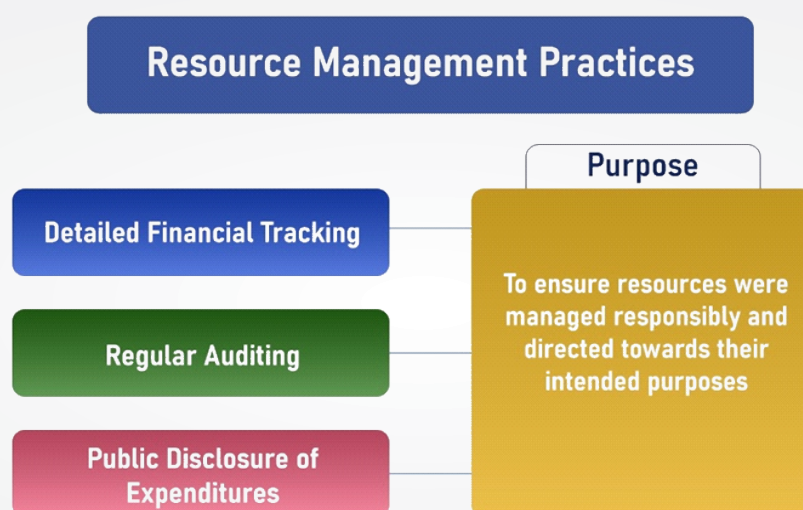


Figure 24: IRP Resource Management Key Practices

In addition, IRP, under the UNDP funded Flood Recovery Programme, employed stringent resource management practices, including detailed financial tracking, periodic audits, and public disclosure of expenditures. These measures ensured that all resources were managed responsibly and directed towards their intended purposes, enhancing transparency and accountability.

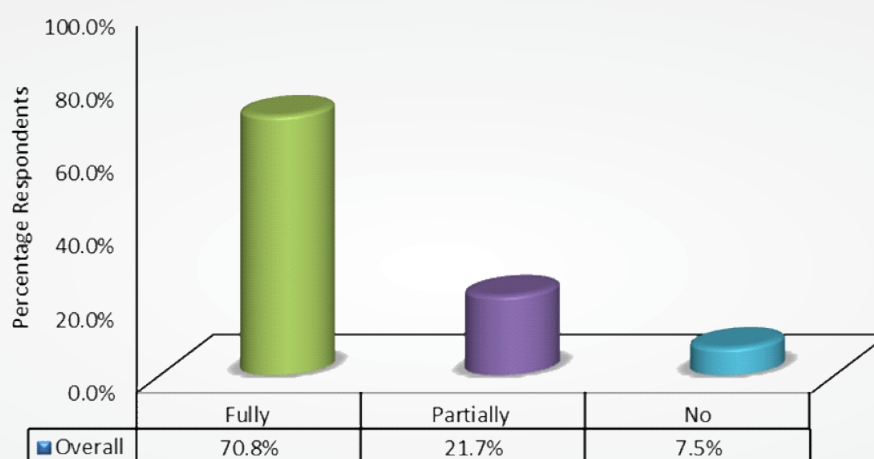


Figure 25: Survey Participants – Project Used Resources Properly²⁹

The graph illustrates respondents' perceptions regarding whether the project has allocated funds to the appropriate areas. A significant majority, 70.8%, indicated that they fully believe the project has used the money in the right areas. This strong endorsement reflects a high level of confidence in the project's financial management and its alignment with community needs and priorities.

²⁹ Exact question asked in the HH survey was "Do you believe the project has used the money in the right areas?"

Additionally, 21.7% of respondents believe that the project has partially used the funds appropriately. Only 7.5% of respondents feel that the project has not used the money in the right areas. This suggests that while the majority of the funds are seen as well-spent, there are some areas where improvements could be made or where the allocation could be more precise. Although this is a small percentage, it highlights a need for further review and possibly more transparent communication or engagement with the community to address any concerns or misalignments. Overall, the data indicates a generally positive perception of the project's financial resource management, with room for addressing specific concerns to ensure that all funds are utilized as effectively and appropriately as possible.

Field Level MEAL Functions

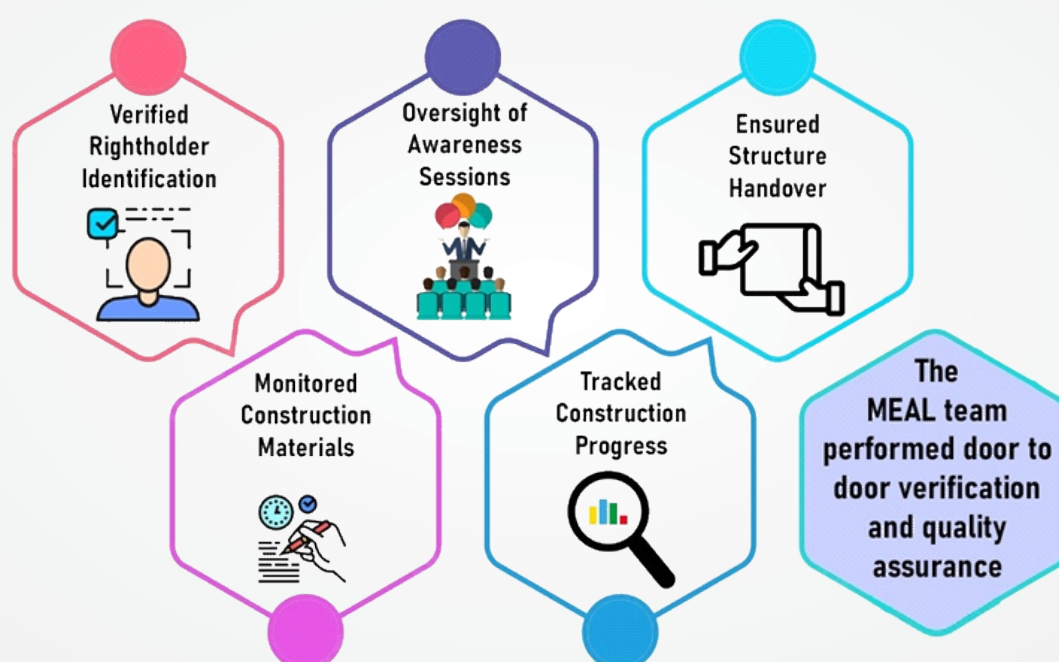


Figure 26: Field Level MEAL Functions

Similarly, the IRP MEAL team utilized monitoring checklists and tools to ensure quality and accountability. These included a checklist for right holder identification/validation, a checklist for construction material monitoring, a checklist for awareness sessions, a checklist for construction progress tracking, and a checklist for structure handover. For instance, ensuring the delivery of high-quality goods at reasonable rates was a top priority for the organization and its staff. The IRP team assessed the quality of materials used for shelters, water tanks, and other structures during various field visits. During an IRP staff monitoring visit to Dadu, Sindh, it was discovered that the quality of the bricks used for shelters was sub-standard, prompting a report to the supply chain department. Similarly, when distributing agricultural tool kits to beneficiary HHs, the IRP MEAL team conducted door-to-door visits for verification and quality assurance. Below is a quote from an interview given by a staff member of IRP:



“Islamic Relief tried to ensure that the items provided were of superior quality and offered at affordable costs. We strived to deliver goods that meet the highest standards to the target population.”

Male Participant – KII IRP Team

Furthermore, to ensure the right beneficiaries are selected for the interventions, the IRP MEAL team validated the right holders based on the vulnerability based selection criteria to ensure transparency accountability and monitoring throughout the process. The selection criteria for the rights holders included the following points i.e. must be affected by flood 2022, shelter washed away by floods, widows, families with PWDs, chronic diseases and elderly people and low-income HHs (e.g. dependent on daily wages).



Conclusions

This Learning Review assessed the IRP's Response and Early Recovery Programme 2022-2023 in Sindh, Balochistan and KP. The IRP has demonstrated capability to provide timely and tailored support to communities affected by disasters. Some of the key achievements of the interventions include the timely delivery of aid, community engagement strategies, and adaptive responses to changing needs in the affected districts.

Furthermore, the IRP involved the affected communities and promoted community engagement to ensure that the aid efforts were relevant, appropriate to the local context, and address the specific needs of the vulnerable groups. Through mechanisms like PDMs and community consultations, IRP has made significant adjustments to its interventions, such as transitioning to cashless banking systems and redesigning shelter solutions.

Despite challenges such as accessibility and displacement, IRP's efforts in delivering essential items and financial assistance promptly have garnered positive feedback from beneficiaries. With trained ERTs and a pre-allocated emergency fund, IRP ensures rapid deployment of aid, addressing immediate needs within critical timeframes. The IRP has significantly contributed to enhancing community preparedness and resilience through targeted interventions, including disaster risk reduction training, sustainable livelihood support, and promoting micro-entrepreneurship. Furthermore, by focusing on long-term strategies such as distributing pregnant buffaloes for sustained income and providing solar kits for essential utilities, IRP has enabled communities to better manage future risks and maintain stability.

Finally, to ensure that people affected by crises can safely report concerns, the IRP has established an effective complaint handling and community feedback mechanism, which includes multiple accessible channels such as hotlines, suggestion boxes, and email. This system ensures transparency, accountability, and inclusivity, accommodating various literacy levels and providing anonymity to protect complainants. Despite high awareness and ease of use reported by most beneficiaries, there remains a need for improved communication regarding response times and procedures.



Recommendations

The key recommendations from the study are as follows:

S. No.	Recommendation	Responsibility
Policy Level Recommendations		
1.	Advocate at relevant forums such as NHN, PHF etc. for establishing a centralized data hub that integrates data from government departments, humanitarian organizations, and others like UNOCHA. This hub should facilitate real-time data sharing to enable swift response. This data hub needs to remain active during relief and recovery phases.	IRP Senior Management
2.	Advocate at relevant forums such as NHN, PHF etc. for establishing a coordinated strategy that includes government departments, humanitarian organizations, and media outlets that can expedite the dissemination of critical data through various local and international media platforms. This platform should prioritize real-time reporting of damages and affected populations to facilitate fast mobilization of resources and response from donors and international humanitarian actors.	IRP Senior Management
Organizational (Strategic) Level Recommendations		
3.	Further strengthen partnerships with local authorities and community organizations to address access challenges in hard-to-reach areas to prepare for future disasters. This includes mapping access routes, establishing emergency response protocols, engaging local communities, and continuously adapting strategies to ensure effective service delivery.	IRP Programme Department
4.	Further, enhance and ensure the availability of standby funding arrangements for emergency response such as for quick disbursement of funds to enable immediate humanitarian action without delays. By securing standby funding, organizations can swiftly deploy resources to address urgent needs such as food, shelter, medical aid, and logistical support in disaster-affected regions.	IRP Senior Management
Organizational (Operational) Level Recommendations		
5.	Building on the experiences from floods 2022, IRP should adopt flexible financial solutions like mobile banking for swift aid delivery through establishing partnerships with local cashless banking options like Jazz Cash, Easypaisa, Sada Pay and Naya Pay, especially in areas with limited access to traditional banking.	IRP Finance and Programme Department

6.	Enhance the list of pre-qualified local vendors for a variety of emergency items ensuring geographical spread covering all the disaster-prone districts of the country.	IRP Procurement Department
7.	Develop a user-friendly mobile application or digital platform in local languages, enabling displaced individuals to register themselves and provide essential information such as location, family size, and specific needs. This would help IRP and other organizations to track and monitor the locations of the frequently relocating displaced populations due to evolving emergency situations resulting in changing needs of the affected population.	IRP Programme and IT Department
8.	Building on the experience of floods 2022, to improve responsiveness leveraging agile communication tools like phone calls, WhatsApp, and virtual meetings needs to be more formally utilized for coordination to ensure efficient decision-making between various departments within the organization.	IRP Senior Management
9.	Continue linkages with previously trained volunteers (ERT members) and also further conduct similar trainings to other community volunteers in disaster prone areas of the country.	IRP Programme Department
10.	To strengthen disaster resilience and economic stability in flood-affected areas, prioritize initiatives that integrate sustainable livelihood development such as livestock farming and micro-entrepreneurship trainings.	IRP Programme Department
11.	Further, build on the climate friendly solutions and interventions implemented in the floods 2022 response such as by avoiding single-use plastic water bottles or utilizing biodegradable or reusable materials for emergency supplies packaging. This approach not only mitigates environmental impact but also promotes long-term community stewardship of natural resources in disaster-affected areas.	IRP Programme Department



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