



EVALUATION SUMMARY

PHASE I HAIYAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) commissioned TANGO International to independently evaluate the emergency relief phase (Phase I: November 2013–September 2014) of its Typhoon Haiyan Emergency Response Program (HERP) and provide recommendations for future LWR emergency responses. TANGO conducted its field evaluation of HERP in September–October 2014 in Cebu and Leyte.

PROJECT SUMMARY

After assessing the needs of Haiyan-devastated communities, LWR planned the multiyear HERP with the goals of supporting sustainable recovery and rebuilding people's livelihoods in affected barangays in Cebu and Leyte. Phase I of HERP was designed to first meet the affected populations' basic needs before transitioning to livelihood recovery. Phase I interventions, implemented through local partner Philippine NGOs, included shelter repair kit (SRK) distribution; cash for work (CFW); non-food item (NFI) and material resource (MR) distribution; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); and early livelihood recovery efforts. Funded by ACT Alliance, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, and churches and individual donors, Phase I reached more than 25,000 Haiyan-affected families.

OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION AND METHODOLOGY

The TANGO evaluation team (ET) used a mixed-methods approach to collect and analyze primary qualitative data and secondary quantitative data. Primary data was collected through 24 focus group discussions with intervention beneficiaries; 38 key informant interviews with beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, local government representatives, and LWR and partner staff; seven expert opinion interviews with national and international experts involved in the broader Haiyan response; and an e-survey among 60 representatives from other humanitarian organizations. Most discussions and interviews were conducted in person. The ET collected secondary data through a structured review of LWR internal documents as well as external Haiyan response process and evaluation documentation.

Several factors influenced the design and implementation of the evaluation, including the loss of institutional memory due to staff turnover and the conclusion of some partnerships. Because the timeline of Phase I WASH and early livelihood recovery projects continued into 2015, these projects were not included in this evaluation.



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BY THE NUMBERS



5,345

Families Given
Shelter Repair Kits



4,790

Beneficiaries Participated
in Cash for Work Activities



26,873

Non-Food Items or Material
Resources Distributed



489

People from 83
Organizations Trained

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

SHELTER

LWR partnered with Habitat for Humanity Philippines (HfHP) to provide SRKs to households in Northern Cebu, Bantayan Island and Western Leyte. The nearly yearlong shelter project used \$1,008,001 USD and distributed SRKs to 5,345 families, exceeding the project's initial target by 24 percent.

The ET concluded that the project's goal of meeting affected communities' shelter repair needs to ensure safe housing was partially met. It observed that SRK distribution was organized and well managed, with beneficiaries participating to speed up the process. The ET found, however, that the project's targeted geographic areas were too expansive, which increased project transaction costs, strained HfHP's monitoring capacity and created tension in communities where not all households in need received support because of overstretched resources.

The ET also concluded that although the project's beneficiary targeting strategy did properly consider vulnerability criteria, it did not properly consider shelter damage criteria, leading to a mismatch of resources and needs. The ET considered the materials in the SRKs to be suitable only for light repairs to surviving structures and not for extensive reconstruction, which was the actual need of the majority of targeted households. Ultimately, the ET found that the SRKs were not effectively used, due to a lack of skilled labor and insufficient construction training for beneficiaries, which resulted in the houses failing to meet Sphere shelter standards.

CASH FOR WORK

LWR partnered with PhilDHRRA to provide CFW opportunities to disaster-affected people in 48 barangays in Northern Cebu and Western Leyte. The implemented CFW activities were designed to meet short-term household and productive spending priorities and to restore access to local services and markets through the removal of debris. The eight-month project used \$500,154 USD, and 4,790 beneficiaries participated in the activities. This level of participation exceeded the project's initial target by 12 percent.

The ET found the CFW project's geographic and beneficiary targeting process to be appropriate and the activities to be well organized, well-resourced and, at least temporarily, empowering to women and communities. The CFW project was also successful in re-engaging barangay officials in community development, strengthening local governance.

Despite these achievements, the ET considered the cash earned to be too little and the duration of activities to be too short to establish household savings or to make a meaningful impact in local markets. It also found that most of the typhoon debris had already been cleared by the time the CFW activities started, indicating that the activities supported general community cleanup rather than the original objective of restoring public access.

NON-FOOD ITEMS AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

LWR partnered with the Ramon Aboitiz Foundation (RAFI) for NFI/MR distribution in nine barangays on Bantayan Island, 33 barangays in Northern Cebu and one city in Western Leyte. The goal of NFI/MR distributions was to meet short-term household and productive material priorities. The distributions, which were conducted over three months, used \$1,287,014 USD and provided 2,700 households with solar lamps and commodity vouchers, 13,195 households with LWR Quilts and hygiene kits, 3,478 children with LWR School Kits, and 7,500 women with LWR Baby Care Kits.

The ET found the quality of NFIs to be high and their distribution appropriate and well organized. It considered that the NFI distribution effectively met household needs. One caveat: The value of the commodity vouchers was too low to cover the expenses of replacing large assets, like boats, in order to meaningfully contribute to livelihood recovery.

Baby Care and School Kits were properly distributed, according to ET findings, but the distribution and quality of the Quilts and Kits were inconsistent. Though many beneficiaries expressed appreciation for the gesture of handmade quilts, the ET revealed that most households did not need them by the time of the distribution and would have preferred items that met their immediate needs. The ET also deemed the hygiene and Baby Care Kits to be insufficient for more than a week's use.

QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

LWR, in collaboration with Church World Service (CWS), provided stakeholders involved in Haiyan relief efforts with support and training on international quality and accountability standards so that they could incorporate appropriate Q&A methods into their programming and ultimately affect institutional change. Using \$120,873 USD, LWR and CWS advised and trained 489 stakeholders from 83 organizations, including LWR's three HERP partners, on various Q&A measures with emphasis placed on the Sphere standards.

The ET found participant interaction to be satisfactory and materials provided to be of high quality. Its post-monitoring survey of participants showed positive results in terms of Q&A awareness and employment of knowledge. After the training, all three HERP partners were encouraged to develop new Q&A policies; the ET confirmed that these were nearly completed at the time of the evaluation, despite receiving limited technical support and budget from their respective institutions.

CONCLUSION

Phase I HERP interventions did not fully meet emergency response goals, according to the ET. Although projects were well organized and met implementation standards, their effectiveness was negated by interventions that were delayed or inappropriate to the local context. LWR's in-country capacity was insufficient to effectively monitor all Phase I projects, and its administrative inflexibility had a negative impact on program efficiency.

While materials and cash provided did ease the recovery of beneficiaries, there was no meaningful contribution to the overall HERP goal of early recovery or rebuilding the livelihoods of affected populations and communities. Emphasis on breadth over depth of programming resulted in interventions that did not meaningfully contribute to communities' resilience functions.

Throughout Phase I, LWR's HERP partners developed their technical capacities and programming sustainability, making them stronger future partners for other INGOs. Local governance and barangay engagement with civil society saw some improvement during Phase I, but the ET did not consider Phase I projects to have had any long-term effects at the community level.

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CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

LWR MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Some of the evaluation findings were difficult for the LWR team to hear and spurred extensive discussions about everything from the methodology and execution of the evaluation and the ET itself to LWR's entire approach to designing and managing emergency operations. This was the first time in recent history that LWR had had a large-scale emergency response operation evaluated so rigorously, and the process was deemed highly valuable on a multitude of levels. In the end, the LWR team validated the majority of the evaluation's findings. The main exception: a few points showing that some relief efforts did not have a sustainable impact on livelihoods and longer-term recovery, which were not the goals of the relief operation in the first phase.

EVALUATION ACTION ITEMS

Because the HERP was in the process of bridging to the multiyear recovery phase when this evaluation was completed, and because the ET had a role in the design and the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) planning of the recovery phase, the evaluation findings were able to be incorporated, as relevant, into adjusted planning for the recovery phase. Because the ET deemed some relief supplies to be insufficient, it encouraged LWR to focus on strengthening both the recovery phase and its overall approach to emergency operations for the future.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

LWR's transfer of learning from this evaluation to wider organization learning, and to its strategy overall, was a clear success from this process. After the debrief and presentation in the field with LWR staff and stakeholders, and because of the nature of the findings, the ET then presented to LWR's senior executive team and later facilitated a two-day Emergency Response Reflection and Learning Workshop. This workshop enabled the CEO, VPs from all departments, and regional and technical program team leaders to come together to revisit and revise LWR's Emergency Operations Strategy and to map out an operational plan to ensure stronger relief efforts for the future. Many of these changes were already applied during the 2015 Nepal earthquake response and continue to be moved forward.

TANGO RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 SHIFT** organization efforts away from emergency response and toward early recovery, possibly focusing on transition programming.
- 2 REVIEW** the Emergency Strategy Core Program and focus on one to two specific intervention areas in which to build organizational capacity.
- 3 REVIEW** the indirect implementation model and its links to intervention choices. If existing partnerships do not exist, focus on longer-term recovery, not immediate relief, efforts.
- 4 DISCONTINUE** or rework the quilts concept into useful and consistent bedding options. The kits must undergo improved quality control to ensure that the contents are consistent and sufficient. Hygiene and Baby Care Kits must be pre-positioned to maximize their usefulness during emergency response.
- 5 LIMIT** the breadth of various interventions and focus on depth of scope of limited, focused and complementary interventions. LWR is well positioned to focus on long-term depth of programming. Offer coherent interventions in fewer communities.
- 6 STRENGTHEN** the use of M&E systems by building the capacity of program staff to use M&E data for intervention and program decision-making. LWR must establish simple, cohesive M&E structures that allow evidence collected to influence strategic decisions.



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