



## **Diagnosis and Recommendations from Oxfam México Facing the Earthquake Emergency**

October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017.- After the earthquakes on September 7<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, Oxfam México sent evaluation teams to Oaxaca, Morelos and Puebla to identify the damage and people's needs.

We concentrated on detecting water, sanitation and hygiene promotion needs (WASH); emergency food security and vulnerable livelihoods (EFSVL); protection and respect of affected people's and gender rights.

Additionally, we collected information about the origin and distribution of aid, and its adherence to minimum humanitarian principles and standards.

### **Our Recommendations**

1. Cooperation is necessary between the three levels of government, civil society organizations, and members of the private sector that carry out response actions. The flow of information will only be improved and the response gaps identified so as not to duplicate efforts, with joint and coordinated damage evaluations.
2. When conducting the census of affected homes and evaluating damage, the authorities should collect data disaggregated by sex, age, disability status, ethnicity, among others. This is the only way to identify the specific needs of each group and design solutions that address them in a differentiated way.
3. We must "rebuild better." As the Sendai Framework notes, it is essential to integrate measures to reduce disaster risk in the response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. This is how we will increase the resilience of people as well as improve housing, vital infrastructure (schools, health services, water supply, among others) and the livelihood of the population in the face of future earthquakes.

### **Our Diagnosis**

In the three states we found:

- Lack of coordination

The three levels of government, civil society and the private sector participating with humanitarian response actions acted without any coordination, which resulted in duplicated efforts and a lack of attention in some areas.

The response of civil society surpassed the capacity of government institutions to channel donations and added to this was a generalized distrust of citizens over the use of aid by officials.

- Incomplete official data

The authorities have not taken an adequate census of the damage or of the people affected; and the little information available is not disaggregated by sex or age group, which makes it difficult to meet the specific needs of girls and boys, women, the elderly and people with disabilities.

In addition, authorities seem to not know about mechanisms and standards of response to a humanitarian crisis, both those established by the country and minimum international standards.

- Inadequate and underused shelters

Although shelters got organized, many people only go to receive aid such as water, food, sanitation and hygiene, but refuse to stay because the facilities do not have adequate physical conditions, or because they fear their belongings will be stolen from their homes.

Some of the affected have sought refuge in friends' or relatives' homes, but some sleep in their backyards or on sidewalks. This denotes the urgent need for housing reconstruction.

- Gender inequality

The population that is most affected are low-income people and especially women, who have seen an increased workload of care and have lost sources of income and jobs.

As long as schools remain closed, women will be forced to stay at home to look after their children. On the other hand, those who participate in productive agricultural or commercial work depend on the completion of the damage census and the reactivation of the supply of raw materials and goods to be able to return to their

economic activities, which are currently on hold.

## **Our Humanitarian Response**

With the funds raised, we implemented an 18-month response strategy, from September 2017 to March 2019.

Of the 186 municipalities in a state of emergency in Morelos, Puebla and Oaxaca, we will give priority to those in which there is more significant damage to protect the rights of the people affected; specifically, where there is a risk that people will be excluded and discriminated against from the institutional response. An example of this are those who live in irregular settlements and who will not be able to access government support for reconstruction.

Working jointly with other civil society and government actors, and considering impacts and solutions differentiated by gender, age, ethnicity and social class, we will act in three areas:

### Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion (WASH) in temporary housing

- Financing and installing water collection and storage systems
- Building or rehabilitation of solutions for the handling of excreta (ecological toilets, latrines, etc.) and solid waste
- Dissemination of information and training for the promotion of good hygiene practices
- Feedback and monitoring mechanisms to know if the population is using the solutions provided

### Protection of rights

- In-depth analysis of protection and gender
- Systematization and broadcasting of information on the rights of people affected and the obligations of authorities in their three levels of government
- Facilitating enforcement processes and access to rights, legal advice, support for transportation
- Training officials on humanitarian principles and lobbying so that the distribution of aid and support for reconstruction is carried out in accordance with people's rights

### Preparation

- Risk analysis
- Draw up a risk map
- Develop early warning community systems

- Incidence in public policies (municipal regulations and budgets)

In addition to the response in the field, Oxfam México has joined citizen initiatives and allied media to ensure the correct and transparent use of public resources and avoid manipulation for electoral purposes.

Oxfam México works with 29 other organizations on the #Epicentro civic platform to ensure that resources destined for reconstruction are used correctly, that reconstruction is carried out with a gender perspective, and respecting the rights of communities, as well as make sure there are consequences in cases of corruption and mismanagement of resources.

### **Our Vision of Humanitarian Action**

Oxfam México has a humanitarian mandate to act when faced with disasters to minimize and alleviate the suffering of people affected by humanitarian crises, save lives and increase the resilience of communities.

All our actions are governed by a policy of respect and guarantee of human rights, and we always take into account the differentiated needs of women, men, girls and boys to avoid the discrimination that results from gender inequality.