

Business in Disaster and Humanitarian Organizations Experiences and Impact: A Case Study of Balakot Bazaar

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Abstract

The paper is about the humanitarian organizations' role in situations of disasters. The focus of the study is on the humanitarian organizations' role for the business community after the disaster. Different dimensions have been taken into account while studying the interaction of humanitarian organizations and the business community. The study took place in Balakot bazaar, situated in North-East of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. 8th October 2005 earthquake destroyed this bazaar and only few shops were remained untouched. The paper is based on the data, collected during the field work in Balakot bazaar. After the earthquake many humanitarian organizations came to help the affected people of this area and started working for the recovery of the people in the bazaar and in the surrounding areas. It is practically not possible to include all these organizations in the study. For this reason, four humanitarian organizations have been selected, so that for the sake of in-depth study. The study has been conducted after five years to see the impacts of different organizations and government agencies on the people of Balakot as a whole and business community in particular. For this purpose, four case studies have been taken. These are Citizen Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA), SRSP, International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) and Oxfam. The study is carried out to see the different dimensions that affected the humanitarian organizations' efforts in the area and also to see their impact on business community. The methodology is flexible and most of the data was collected through participant observation, formal and informal talking and some informal interviews. The results of the study show that there are multiple factors that affect the work of humanitarian organizations with the affected people. These are the political setup of the area, caste composition, topographical distribution of area, urban and rural distribution, state priorities and considerations etc. At the same time the people and their business orientation is affected by the work of humanitarian organizations.

Keywords: Business, Disaster, Humanitarian organization, experience, Impacts, case study, Balakot Bazar

1. Introduction

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the business community after the disaster. Different dimensions have been taken into account while studying the interaction of humanitarian organizations and the business community. The study took place in Balakot bazaar, situated in North-East of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. 8th October 2005 earthquake destroyed this bazaar and only few shops were remained untouched.

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2. Literature Review

In this section the relevant literature is reviewed. It includes writings about the disasters, anthropology of disaster, humanitarian efforts and disaster etc. Pakistan is susceptible to disaster risks from a variety of hazards including avalanches, storms, famines, earthquakes, epidemics, floods, glacial lake outbursts, landslides. High priority hazards in terms of their frequency and scale of impact are:- earthquakes, droughts, flooding, Wind Storms and Landslides that have caused widespread damages and losses in the past (NDMA, 2007). This is matter of no surprise that Pakistan is victim of disasters since its inception. This area was subjected to natural disasters even before the independence. Though the magnitude and duration of these natural hazards vary, this made the people, government and other stakeholders used to it. Most often, these disasters are handled by the people themselves but in the past few decades the issue of disasters and disaster management gained importance on local, national and international level. October 8th, 2005 earthquake is considered severe of its kind and is the biggest disaster in the short history of Pakistan. It was severe because it

caused more casualties destroyed houses, shops, roads causing huge destruction. This episode in Pakistan history is considered as a landmark because the magnitude and level of destruction was much higher than those caused by previous telluric episodes. It gained consideration on local, governmental and other nongovernmental level. Studies about business and disaster are not carried out very often. Though the field of disaster studies is not naïve in the sense that researches have been conducted and separate departments have been developed in universities to focus on this issue. Studies have been carried out by many concerned disciplines but the units of analysis are different as mentioned by Kathleen J. Tierney. Since its inception, the field of disaster research has focused overwhelmingly on units of analysis other than businesses. The earliest systematic U. S. disaster studies, which were initiated just after the Second World War, documented the post disaster responses of individual victims, households, community residents, and public sector organizations such as fire and police departments (Tierney 1995: 1). Most of the studies about business and disaster are carried out in US and are relevant for the better understanding of disaster happened there. Anthropological studies on how business communities are affected by disasters cross culturally and how these communities experience the disasters, are more rare.

Disasters result change on many levels and it involves almost all social sciences to consider it. Political scientist, geographer, economists, sociologist anthropologists are all fundamental to see the in-depth picture of these disasters and the change it bring with itself, the techniques of anthropology as ethnography is important to acknowledge because anthropologists try to get the whole picture, their approach is holistic. Since the beginning of the discipline, anthropologists have been interested in how people draw upon and alter their belief systems in efforts to come to terms with events of catastrophic change, violence, loss, resettlement, and even humanitarian relief (Lindstrom 1993, Maida 1996). These events can involve changes in social institutions like religious beliefs or customs (Stewart and Harding 1999), social organization (Colson 1973, Oliver-Smith 1977), attitudes and values (Bode 1977, Oliver-Smith 1992), even marriage institutions (Loizos, 1977).

Aristotle called human being social animals. They can't live alone. Homo sapiens are living in the form of families, bands, tribes and other such groups to ensure its survival or to increase the chances of survival, to get help from its fellow humans at times when it is necessary. Humanitarianism is the extension of this concept though on international level it got its formal distinction a few decades back. The concept of humanitarianism came into existence and was considered necessary after Second World War. This was created to bring so called Third World and First World together by extending help at the time of emergencies and disasters. What exactly is it that we here call "humanitarianism"? Empirically, it

is a flexible concept, a sort of ethical object with a high value added that many agents use to justify their actions. As a convention—albeit an empirically constructed one—we can suggest three main criteria. The first criterion concerns timing, for humanitarianism is always a matter of emergency. The suddenness of an event requires immediate action, unlike conditions addressed by other, more long-term approaches, such as those relating to what is commonly known as “development” (Ferguson 1994). The second criterion concerns the object of humanitarian mobilization, which consists, above all, in saving lives. Those humanitarian efforts are invested with such a high level of legitimacy stems precisely because of the claim that they save people from deaths caused by starvation, disease, or injury. The third criterion relates to the action of humanitarianism, grounded in a moral sentiment, in the classical English philosophers’ sense. It acts in the registers of emotions and values, of what people feel and believe. It is these three criteria that are found in the “management of the crisis”, as the Venezuelan defense minister put it on December 24 (Didier and Paula: 2005, Agamben 1997, Boltanski 1993)

For convenience, the terms humanitarian organization and NGO is being used synonymously. Literature on the history of NGOs shows disagreement on the definition of NGO or humanitarian organizations. Though there are some legislation that define NGOs, the definitions about parameters as the scope, area under operation, number, size and importance of these organizations vary. NGOs are entities meant to serve distinct communities. There is a big debate on the definition of NGOs in the literature. NGOs have multiple challenges in providing long-term solutions to eradicate poverty and improve conditions for communities in developing and the under developed countries. It is increasingly a focus of NGOs, which are important players in the global economy since the 1970s (Coate and Handmer, 2006).

United Nations have been active in defining the NGOs and its role. In their review about the humanitarian organization for Red Cross cited the definition of NGO. In Resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996 the Economic and Social Council did decide to specify that an NGO is:

“Any such organization that is not established by a governmental entity or intergovernmental agreement ...including organizations that accept members designated by governmental authorities, provided that such membership does not interfere with the free expression of views of the organization. The basic resources of the organization shall be derived in the main part from contributions of the national affiliates ...Any financial contribution or other support, direct or indirect, from a Government to the organization shall be openly declared to the ... United Nations” (Ryfman 2007: 6)

“A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a not-for-profit, voluntary citizens’ group, which is organized on a local, national or international level to address

issues in support of the public good. Task-oriented and made up of people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens' concerns to Governments, monitor policy and program implementation, and encourage participation of civil society stakeholders at the community level. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor, and implement international agreements. Some are organized around specific issues, such as human rights, the environment or health" (United Nations, 2005). In today's world where the world communities are getting more near due to the faster means of transportation and communication that human being ever experienced, the role of humanitarian organizations is expanding. Over the past two decades humanitarian intervention has played an increasingly large part in the management of world affairs (Duffield et al. 2001).

Vulnerability is fundamentally a political ecological concept. ... from the perspective of hazards and disasters, vulnerability is the conceptual nexus that links the relationship that people have with their environment to social forces and institutions and the cultural values that sustain or contest them.... Disasters as multidimensional, all-encompassing occurrences sweep across every aspect of human life, impacting environmental, social, economic, political and biological conditions. Vulnerability can become a key concept in translating that multidimensionality into the concrete circumstances of life that account for a disaster (Blaikie et al, 1994; Comfort et al, 1999; Cutter, 1996; Hewitt, 1983b, Oliver Smith, 2007).

"Different disciplines approach to the disaster differently. Political scientist seemed less interested to deal with the disaster though disasters are always political occasions. Politics is deeply involved in handling it from start till the end. Most of the times disasters are considered as political opportunities where political actors start acting on each level, local, national and international. Disasters often strip away layers of semantic, symbolic, and process cover to provide clear insights into the nature, priorities, and capabilities of authorities, governments and entire regimes. They [disasters] are deeply, deeply political" (Olson 2008: 167). Disasters constitute "exogenous shocks" to which modern political systems must respond, so it should not come as a surprise therefore that literally within minutes after any major impact, disasters start becoming political. The politicization of the event then only increases as the affected community, or at times an entire society, moves from emergency response through the recovery and reconstruction phases" (ibid)

3. Methodology

The methodology was flexible while collecting the data. I tried my best to participate in most of the events that took place in the bazaar during my stay there. As a participant observer I remained in the bazaar till late nights. I

participated in most of the training sessions that were organized by NGOs for the shopkeepers. I worked with the NGOs that are still present there and worked on different project for the people in the surrounding on Balakot bazaar. This kind of interaction with NGOs made it possible for me to study their organizational activity from within. Some organizations had already left the area.so I went to their offices not situated in nearby. Moreover I also worked with the people who were the employees of these organizations. I travelled different parts of Kaghan valley for the collection of data like Kaghan, Naran, and Shogran etc.

Data is collected through semi structured and unstructured interviews. Mostly, the process of data collection proved to be so much flexible that there was no questioning and answering but just a discussion. Some time I felt that my very presence was a big question for my respondents and they were eager to tell me their experiences and tales about this disaster and reconstruction with slight probing. It was just because of the way I introduced myself in those communities. I also used quantitative techniques to get the numerical data.

4. Findings

After earthquake disaster, number of local, national, and international NGOs reached Balakot to help the affected people. They worked for the affected people in different fields: some worked on health and education other worked on livelihood, enterprise development, in agriculture, construction of shelters etc. For this study, some were chosen and analyzed on how effectively they worked with the people generally and with businessmen particularly and how that has affected the people of this area. There are still some NGOs working in this area like SRSP that is doing projects of International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) on enterprise development, Sangee foundation, Rural Development Project RDF etc. I will discuss three organizations e.g. Oxfam, SRSP-ICMC, Citizen Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA) and Khushali Bank (KB), which is a national bank mainly dealing in small loans that have been given against social collateral. What about the people of Balakot in general and that of Balakot bazaar in particular? This was an important question: How the people of Balakot perceive theNGOs?Below is the table based on the opinion of Balakot bazaar people about NGOs?

Table: Local people’s view on the performance of NGOs (national and international NGOs)

	Number	Percentage
Good	59	56.2%
Bad	33	31%
Normal	8	7.6%
No view	5	4.8%

The table above shows the sample opinion about the work of humanitarian organizations that arrived here after the earthquake. As evident from the table, the opinion is varied and different and people have different approaches. Fifty-nine respondents are positive about the work of these organizations. Farooq Awan, a tea

stall owner said, “It was not possible to live after earthquake if these humanitarian organizations would not reach to rescue us.” On the other hand, 33 respondents were against the role of these organizations. The views are diverse for opposing the role of NGOs. Mainly it is related to the change in their social structure and social fabric. Javed Mughal, who is running a shop of electric generators repair, told me, “These NGOs spoil our society. Before earthquake children used to respect elders, women were happy inside the walls of house, there was love amongst the people of this area. The money was not as much important as it is now but the love was. Everything is changed to worst and all these changes are because of the arrival of NGOs in this area.” He was of the view, “The money that people received from NGOs did not bring prosperity for them.” Thus, the people in Balakot had mixed views about the performance and existence of NGOs in their area. People were benefited with the presence of NGOs in this area. They got aid in the form of money and groceries. They got tents and food. They also received medical aid with the help of different NGOs. However, for them the main problem arose when they observed that the NGOs whether national or international were not sensitive towards their cultural demands.

Before going into detail about the above mentioned four organizations, a brief description on how they work will be provided at the time of the earthquake in Balakot, this shows how they carried out their activities and how Balakot bazaar has been affected by the criteria that have been set forth by NGOs during different phases of disaster cycle. In the initial phase right after the earthquake that is the relief phase, the share of Balakot was more than other parts of the area as this place was more accessible to the people; NGOs and other government agencies came here quickly than other parts of Balakot Tehsil. After the initial phase when this area was labeled a red zone, the NGOs stopped the reconstruction in this area. anNGOs personnel, told this to me, “Because government considers the bazaar area as red zone and they were not given the NGOs by any authority so they refrained from working there.” Secondly, the structure and the level of interaction of NGOs with the people is almost all the time specific to the residents of the area. A considerable amount of time was spent with the NGOs, participating in their activities and trainings of those that were still working here. Interviewing the people who worked here with NGOs became a very important endeavor. Consulting their head offices to know how they were instructed to interact with the population in the field and how they are assigned to the given projects became of the utmost importance considering the stigma that became attached to some NGOs from specific segments of the population. It became clear to me that they accessed the population where they were living and work with them on that level. One thing that quickly became evident was the approach of NGOs in so far as they work on the rural level and reach out to the residence of the people for whom they work. It is at their residence that they can observe the real situation of the people; evaluate their economic position, family structure, level of hygiene, the culture, survival strategy, impact of a disaster etc. to help formulate and implement programs or services that would be of help to the victims. As far as the Balakot

bazaar is concerned, the shopkeepers are not living there and their residences are not situated within bazaar. They live in Garlat, Balakot village or nearby villages. The cases, which will be discussed in preceding sections, will provide proof that they got these grants and other relief goods because they were engaged in community networks at village or Muhallah (street) level. It is told by most of the shopkeepers, “The GI sheets they used to build their shops were given to them for their houses and they used those GI steel sheets in the reconstruction of shops.” CNFA and Khushali Bank dealt directly with shopkeepers. Oxfam also worked with shopkeepers directly but the level of work was again related to the nearby union councils of the area.

4.1 Caste composition in Balakot

Caste composition of Balakot is important to understand the local politics. This is helpful and necessary to understand the level of interaction between different castes and also with different humanitarian organization after disaster. Four castes living in Balakot are worth to discuss as they influence the political atmosphere and the trade in the bazaar. Swati caste people are holding most of the land in Balakot bazaar and surroundings. Leaders on local level are always from this caste. Gujjar caste people are not having land in the bazaar but have influence on local politics as they are almost forty percent of the Tehsil Balakot. They have been the tenants of Swati caste people. They are living in the surrounding hills and have shops in the bazaar. Syeds are living in the upper part of the Kaghan valley. They are prominent in politics and for many years they have been representing this area in provincial and national assemblies. Awan caste people are living near bazaar and have main share in Balakot bazaar business. Other castes are Mughal, Turk, Rajput, Afghan etc.

4.2 Sarhad Rural Support Program (SRSP) and International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)

Sarhad Rural Support Program was working here before the earthquake and it is a national NGO formed in 1992. Before the earthquake, it worked for the community development and microcredit disbursement like other rural support programs included in Rural Support Network (RSN) like National Rural Support Program (NRSP), Baluchistan Rural Support Program (BRSP) etc. It has been said that SRSP did not collect the disbursed money after earthquake.

SRSP was setup before the earthquake to interact with the people and that setup was a vital base-line to the people of Balakot. After the earthquake this setup is used for different purposes. It distributed the relief checks from government side as well in some union councils like Garlat. Before the earthquake, they worked with Community Organizations (COs) formed by SRSP at the village level. There could be more than one CO in one village. Those COs were responsible for pointing out the work that needed to be done. Regular meetings were held and there were treasuries in place for the saving of funds by the participants. Micro credits were used at the discretion of the members; especially the president and secretary, of the COs. COs were responsible for identifying the issues that needed to be addressed. For the last three years, the SRSP has changed its CO structure. Now there are COs at Muhallah

level, Village Organization VO and Local Support Organization (LSO). VO is on village level while LSO is on union council level. Every organization has its structure having president, secretary, finance secretary etc.

The entire COs and VOs are connected to LSO. SRSP seek the recommendation of the LSO to approve the project for their area though VOs can also directly consul SRSP but the consent of LSO is necessary. There is one LSO in Garlat union council but the case of Balakot is unique in the sense that it has two LSOs. In an interview with Naheed Akhtar khan who is project coordinator of SRSP and head of Balakot region, I asked about the reason of two LSOs in one union council. She said, “There was one LSO initially in Balakot with the name of *Shaoor I Naswan* (awareness of women) and it was run by women.” Later, the name was changed because it was highly criticized by local community that it is only for women especially the women of the Non-Swati tribe people of Balakot. Now the name of this LSO is Rising Balakot. Still seventy percent of the members are female and it is running the LSO smoothly. Saeed ul Zaman was very active in this LSO and he carried out most of the activities. His sister is the president of this LSO.

There was no Swati person in this LSO. Another group that is under the leadership of Suhrab khan Swati came to SRSP and said that, “Rising Balakot is not their representative and they will make their own LSO.” I asked madam Naheed khan as if they were pressurized about making of this new LSO she replied negatively. Later on, when I asked one of the members of Rising Balakot LSO and a social worker, Doctor Mazhar, who is also practicing a Homeopathic clinic in Balakot too, told me, “We suffered a lot in the making of Rising Balakot LSO.” Doctor Mazhar is secretary of communication in Rising Balakot and president of VO Manglee. He said that women made this LSO and they support them and the first name of LSO. As they are living in male dominated and especially Swati dominated society, this name and LSO was highly criticized by Swatis and on the basis that women cannot represent them well. Mazhar told me, ‘In our LSO other than Swati caste people are dominant and a plus point is that the women representation is in excess. Swatis made this issue as a matter of ego. They pressured SRSP and in response, SRSP pressured us. They told SRSP that this LSO and its members could not represent them. They also raised questions about the social data that was provided by the LSO to SRSP.’ He additionally said, “Social data is detailed information about the people of an area.

It is responsibility of LSOs to provide data about the vulnerable persons that are present in their jurisdiction and other bodies like COs and VOs help them to provide it. It includes complete profiles of the members and of extremely vulnerable persons. What he or she has, what is his or her income source, where he or she is living, his or her house condition if have one, cattle, vehicles, electrical appliances etc. based on these information SRSP formulate its grants and other things to help the people increase their earnings or make their life better with the consent of LSO.” So social data is actually base line data, that has been used by SRSP in development work and SRSP do funding according to this data. Mazhar said, “Eventually the matter solved through mediation and another LSO has been registered with the name of Karwan-

Balakot. Now SRSP is doing funding to them (Rising Balakot LSO) only and they invite the Karwan-I-Balakot members in training and other capacity building events.” Karwan Balakot is a local NGO that has come into being after earthquake. It has been registered and helped the people of Swat and Buner when they were displaced in military operations against terrorists and also in flood affected areas by sending things of daily use and food. It is considered a Swati tribe based NGO of Balakot though some teachers of other castes are also members and active participants in it. It had been formed by Suhrab Khan who is Swati and is the owner of many shops in the market. He is the main person who takes part in financing and supervises this NGO. Taimur Khan who is member of Karwan-I-Balakot NGO and LSO said, “We made second LSO because the first one was not representative of the caste of Swatis. It was just a drawing room LSO and was not public. Saeed ul Zaman made this NGO with the help of his sister, as he knows it that such NGOs and relief activities can best be exploited if you have women so Saeed ul Zaman is using women to get more funds and activities for him. This has made Karwan I Balakot LSO by public and for public.”

After the initial relief activities, SRSP has done four projects until now. The first project was that of International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) and it was the disbursement of grants. ICMC gave the first grant to seventy-three persons in Balakot Tehsil. In the second phase, ICMC hand over its project to SRSP and still this project is going on. In the second phase, it gave forty two thousand rupees each to one hundred and fifty individuals. It is still in operation, recently a shop burned in the market of Banaras. He was given a grant of rupees forty two thousand as he was member of VO Manglee. He is the maternal uncle of Saeed ul Zaman. Only two grants were given by LSO Rising Balakot in the Balakot bazaar. One is to Banaras whose shop burned down and second is to Farooq Zaman who has a food restaurant. He is the paternal uncle of Doctor Mazhar who is the secretary of communication in Rising Balakot LSO. So both the persons, who are given the grants, are near relatives of the LSO cabinet members.

The discussion about SRSP and ICMC discloses the conflict of two groups on the resources, the Swati caste and the rest (Gujjar and Awan). On the other hand SRSP itself has been pressurized by the one group and they inevitably formed two LSOs in one union council. Struggle for power and resources have been triggered in local groups, resulting elevation of differences between already antagonistic groups. Nepotism and favoritism is also evident.

4.3 Citizen Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA)

Founded in 1985, CNFA is a Washington, DC- based, non- partisan, not- for- profit organization dedicated to stimulating economic growth around the world by nurturing entrepreneurship, private enterprise, and market linkages. Since inception, CNFA has actively promoted public- private sector partnership as a way to jumpstart economic growth. USAID designed a recovery strategy to deal with short-term humanitarian needs, long term economic, and livelihoods recovery that would be necessary. The Improving Livelihoods and Enterprise Development Program (I-LED) is a \$28

million initiative implemented by CNFA to assist communities in North West frontier Province (NWFP) and Azad Jamu Kashmir (AJK). The region most affected by disaster. While I- LED was originally intended to last only three years, the program was extended for an additional 14 months, wrapping up in September 2010. In addition to the high death toll and untold human suffering, the earthquake devastated agricultural economy of these regions and damaged more than 80 percent of their infrastructure. In response to the economic destruction resulting from the quake, I-LED has directly generated increased incomes and employment and improved economic linkages for the earthquake-affected populations by developing sectors with potential for economic competitiveness (CNFA official website).

CNFA worked in Balakot Tehsil mainly in tourism and hotel industry to help it recover. It also helped in other areas in the relief phase immediately after the earthquake. The information about CNFA is from the participants that worked with CNFA and one of the respondents Mazhar Ali¹ Meeting all the victims who have been helped by CNFA with their projects was certainly enlightening.

CNFA came to Balakot in December 2005. Initially it worked in partnership and was the donor of Relief International. It was not directly involved initially. Later in 2008, it started working independently. The United State Agency for International Development (USAID) is the main donor of CNFA. Mazhar explained, “There were seven areas where CNFA focused. These areas are agriculture, livestock, dairy, potato, tourism, vegetable and fruit, and nursery for plantation. One project that it completed with some other INGOs was Improving Livelihood and Enterprise Development (ILED). The target group was all who were being affected by earthquake.” Mazhar said, “They started working with people to find the most affected by conducting focus group discussions, door-to-door surveys, meetings with local government people like nazims and councilors etc and other socially active people. They made those people their representatives in community who were having more information about community like teachers. In the initial phase of relief, CNFA helped for free. All the projects in initial phase, which was relief phase, were fully funded. He said that CNFA gave buffaloes, cows, sheep, and hens freely. It also helped developing free dairies where the milk of these could be stored and sold to other people.” He said, “They made associations in this first phase. They used these associations in the second phase and worked on all those seven areas that have already been mentioned. They introduced new seeds and new technology in the potato growing in Batakunde that is famous for the potatoes growth in the whole valley of Kaghan. They also conducted training to educate local potato growers to the new ways of growing.” About Balakot bazaar, he said, “Immediately after the first phase, CNFA conducted meetings with the administration of bazaar. Muhammad Asif, who was, afterwards, made the president and Abdul Rauf who is the biggest

¹One of my key respondents, worked with CNFA from the start till the end of the project. These days he is working with Relief International in Daira Ismail Khan as field officer. He is dweller of village Garlat near Balakot bazaar.

wholesale dealer of this area and having shops in Balakot, were representing the Balakot bazaar. They reached the agreement that the selected shopkeepers will be given hundred thousand rupees each by CNFA.” These four hundred shops were identified by CNFA and all traders association. Later on due to different reasons, CNFA left for Naran and Shogran where it renovated and rebuilt the affected hotels. The first reason was that the new administration of all traders association was having extra demands from CNFA that was not possible for CNFA. Secondly CNFA structure was to work on 25% and 75% basis. The 25 % of the expenditure was bore by the affectees and 75% was bore by CNFA. This formula was ill fitting for Balakot bazaar’s needs so they quit this area for other parts of the valley. The third reason why they vacated this area was the red zone issue, but in 2010 they came back.

Muhammad Jaffer²explained, “Muhammad Asif was saying that only the shopkeepers of Balakot would be given the money while Sardar Muhammad Yusuf, ex nazim of district Mansehra, said that shopkeepers of Sat Bani and Hangrai should also be included. After that, Muhammad Jaffer added that they did not see CNFA here.” Mazhar told me, “CNFA was leaving this area, as it was not suitable for work in this area but Junaid Shah, son of Qasim Shah, Ex. Member of national assembly, who was Tehsil nazim, a big name in hotel industry in this area, asked them not to leave but to work in other parts of valley like Shogran and Naran.” About this issue Kashif Siddique, a member from the bazaar association said, “They held meetings with CNFA and they were ready to start work here. They made an appointment to meet in a hotel in Balakot and waited on them. However, they received a phone call and were told that Junaid Shah took that project with him for hotel industry as he was looking for personal benefit.” Kashif Siddique said, “Political involvement made the reconstruction worsen because of such issues.”

CNFA constructed fifteen hotels in Naran while six in Shogran. Out of fifteen, some were fully reconstructed while some were renovated in Naran while in Shogran, six were fully rebuilt and two were renovated. The Qasim Shah’s hotel in Shogran was the biggest of all that werereconstructed. In my first meeting with Mazhar, he explained, “CNFA shifted its project from Balakot to Naran and Shogran was because of political interference.”CNFA constructed hydro power plants in Kaghan valley and helped to promote tourism after the earthquake because it was badly affected. Mazhar said, “Saith Matee, who is now the president of T-PAK, helped them a lot, guided them, and facilitated their understanding about tourism here.” CNFA developed Tourist Promotion Association of Kaghan valley (T-PAK) and gave five hundred thousand rupees to T-PAK to promote tourism in this valley. It also gave access to media for same purpose.

CNFA came to Balakot in 2010 in its third phase. Three hotels were renovated and two butcher’s shops were constructed. They also held trainings regarding the hoteling for managers, waiters and the owners and demonstrated how they can improve the hotel industry, to attract more tourists and to meet the international standards of

²a shopkeeper and was active member of traders association, participated in meetings

hotels. In construction in Balakot, the share of CNFA was 2/3 in each case. Muhammad Fayez, son of Saith Matee, who runs hotels in Balakot and Naran, said, “They came here just to show the media and the world that they work in the most affected areas of earthquake. They have spent almost all of their funds in big hotels of Naran and Kaghan and spent nothing in Balakot as compared to that.”

Shoaib Khan of Rehmat Park that has been renovated by CNFA in Balakot told me “They went to CNFA for assistance too. They asked them to get registered first in T-PAK. They paid five thousand rupees registration fee and got registered with T-PAK. CNFA did not work here first because this place was considered as red zone. Later they came back when the red zone issue got calm. The items of renovation that are provided by CNFA included; mattresses, furniture, electric generator, crockery, barb Q stands, pan fax boards.”

This humanitarian organization came to Balakot to help the most affected people in the area. As Balakot was adversely affected so it planned to work here for the restarting and promotion of business and entrepreneurship. Its priorities changed when it started working with local people and government authorities. It wanted to give grants to the affected shopkeepers but MNA, who is from Gujjar caste and most of his voters are Gujjar, not have shops in bazaar but in the suburbs, want them to extend these grants to those shopkeepers, which was not feasible for CNFA. Government authorities consider this bazaar area as red zone so CNFA was stopped from working here though after five years they came back, when this red zone restriction were softened. There is no logic to soften the reconstruction restriction in this so called red zone though the threat is same as it was five years back.

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