

Government of Bangladesh/United Nations

Joint Early Recovery Coordination meeting, December 13

FIRST DRAFT

1. Background

Following the Sidr crisis, the UN activated the Cluster approach, approved by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (made up of the UN agencies, the Red Cross family and NGOs consortia). The following clusters have been operational to date: Food (WFP), Logistics (WFP), Water and sanitation (UNICEF), Emergency shelter (IFRC), health (WHO) and Early recovery (UNDP). The government appointed a list of focal points of different ministries.

This week the Government of Bangladesh has officially announced the transition to "Early Recovery and Residual Relief" phase. Actually, the Advisor and the US Marines have left on site Barisal Coordination. Therefore, remain humanitarian needs will be conducted as part of the early recovery efforts.

Representatives of the government (12 Ministries and departments), the Office of the Resident Coordinator and the cluster leads were present at the meeting.

2. Minutes of the meeting

The Secretary of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM) opened the meeting, inviting the participants from government and development partners to come up with constructive suggestions in order to improve the existent coordination mechanisms. He invited other actors to present the current status in the work of the clusters. After each presentation, he invited the government counterparts to comment and supplement with necessary information. The summary of presentations and status is as follows:

The Director General of the Disaster Management Bureau made a presentation of the clusters coordination system and introduced the upcoming early recovery assessment (to be ready 30 of December).

The cluster lead for Food presented the status, and mentioned that 4 meeting have taken place, as well as some coordination meetings at the district level. Around 2/3 of the support has been provided directly by the government. An assessment is currently being conducted in the field. Food concerns will still be an issue until February/March 2008.

Water and sanitation. The main issue is not anymore availability of water, but rather water quality. Progress on water is considered satisfactory, but further

attention should be paid to sanitation issues as we move on. Sub-national coordination is being initiated. The group is co-chaired by the government counterpart.

The emergency shelter group pointed out that there are plenty of challenges in this area, not the least inadequate roof and standard building practices. While considerable work has been done on awareness and tools (e.g. manual for construction, communication materials), reporting and coordination with key government counterparts offer room for improvement.

Regarding health, the close linkages with food, nutrition, water and sanitation issue were noted. Substantial work has been done, for instance on disease control and preparedness and monitoring the health situation. In addition, an assessment is being prepared by the WHO at government's request. The cluster is co-chaired by the government and coordination meeting have happened in several districts.

It has been agreed that the logistic groups has been deactivated and innovative solution for logistics discussed with the government as necessary.

In addition to the cluster discussions, other important points were mentioned:

- There is a shift required at this time, to alter collective approach for an intensive relief effort, to a more comprehensive approach in line with the Action Plan to satisfy residual relief requirements while stepping up early recovery actions
- Early recovery actions is broad and inclusive of many sectors. It was noted that areas such as education, telecommunication or electricity and possibly others are not covered in the cluster mechanism.
- This is the basis of realigning the humanitarian agency's clusters to the sectors designated by Government. Participation of Line Ministries is critical at this stage.
- The early recovery has a short window, estimated in Bangladesh at 6-8 months (i.e. until the funds mobilized by the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) are made available.

3. Next steps

- **As an initial step, a weekly Joint coordination meeting between key Line Ministries and clusters (chaired by Secretary of the MOFDM) will be conducted. A small coordination cell could play a secretarial role to these meetings and ensure appropriate follow up.**
- **It was agreed that a proposal for the coordination mechanism, including government structure, UN structure and necessary interface will be prepared by the UN for an initial discussion with the Secretary.**

- **It was agreed that all Line ministries will regularly share information with the DMIC.**

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Early Recovery Cluster

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CURRENT SITUATION

- Membership: 15 agencies
- Focal points with other clusters established
- Activities to date:
 - Online information management
 - Needs Assessment Inventory
 - Technical Working Group – needs assessment
 - Early recovery cluster briefings
 - Weekly meetings
 - Coordination
 - Disbursement of early recovery funds (USD 4 million approx)

PROJECTION

- The worst of the emergency is over
- Some urgent needs remain
- Longer term development will take time
- Something has to be done in the interim
- Communities and local administrations are spontaneously recovering

EARLY RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

Action plan for the next 4 months to bridge the gap between emergency relief and longer term development

- 1) Augment emergency assistance
- 2) Transition from emergency assistance to recovery
 - Strengthen Government coordination structure
 - Shift closer to Government-led coordination
 - Build local Government capacity
- 3) Laying the foundation for longer term development
 - Needs assessment
 - National conference
 - Strategic planning – Early Recovery Framework
- 4) Implement and monitor early recovery

Augment Emergency Assistance

Continue addressing
immediate basic needs

Transition from Emergency to Recovery

Propose and support coordination structure for recovery

- Government-led coordination
- Involve development partners
- Focus on early recovery with long term view
- Strengthening local Government and communities

The Process

