



**Minutes of the Food Cluster Meeting**  
**Venue: UN Conference Room, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor**  
**Date: 28 November 2007**  
**Time: 11:00 am**

**Cluster Lead: WFP**

Mr. Douglas Broderick, Country Director, WFP chaired the meeting. The participants list is attached as Annex 1.

- The Chair asked if any agency had any information on reports of acute food insecurity in cyclone affected areas. No reports were forthcoming. He emphasized that all should look into the food insecurity issue for short term and long term needs/response interventions.
- USAID informed that they have deployed DART assessment teams in the fields for more rapid assessments. The teams will be there for 6/7 days. The teams will visit to those places where no one has gone before. They can share their findings after they come back from the fields regarding the food market situation or food security issues.
- The Chair asked if UNICEF has any information on the malnutrition or diarrhoea cases at the affected districts. UNICEF replied that they do not have any information on this.
- UNICEF representative informed that they have planned to do nutrition survey at the cyclone affected districts through Helen Keller International. Discussion and planning is ongoing. The survey is likely to start sometime in December 2007.
- WFP informed that some agencies are going to conduct food security assessment shortly. WFP and FAO are closely coordinating. WFP is also in discussions with UNICEF re: nutrition assessment, and is looking forward to close collaboration. FAO will start doing their Livelihoods assessment in early December from 3<sup>rd</sup> December to 22 December. The areas they will be focusing are: agriculture, fisheries, forestry and livestock. ILO will be doing the Livelihoods assessment. Oxfam and SCF-US are also said to be planning a livelihoods assessment.
- The Chair asked if UNICEF has any specific nutrition survey data. They informed that there is both an HKI 2005 nutritional survey as well as a MICS 2005 survey. USAID informed that SCF-US has done some baseline surveys on nutrition for their programme areas. All these can be used as baseline data for conducting the nutrition survey.
- The Chair informed that WFP is pressing the Government to do food and crop assessment which is an important tool for donors and the UN agencies.
- UNICEF suggested that FAO, WFP, UNICEF, Oxfam, SCF-US-if all these agencies can do a joint assessment of the food security situation at the affected

areas. It has been agreed that once the FAO Mission is here the group will sit together and decide on the issue of joint assessment. The FAO Mission is likely to do a presentation sometime during their mission on their findings.

- WFP informed about the Information Management meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November at CDMP Office. The purpose of the meeting was to share ideas on how to communicate to a larger group who is doing what and where regarding response interventions. He informed that different clusters are using different formats for compiling this information. DER has its own response matrix format. These will soon be compiled into one standard format to be used by all. He also shared with the members that IBM and the Lanka Foundation have a tool called Sahana, which is a tool for relief response management. The GoB is exploring the possibility of incorporating this into their system. The DER and DMIC website will continue to be used for information sharing.
- USAID raised the issue of coordination with the Barisal Emergency Response Cell of the Government. WFP replied that these can be done through MoFDM and DMIC as they have established links with Barisal.
- WFP Logistics response team on behalf of the logistics cluster has traveled to the field to undertake a logistics assessment. On Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> December the team will hold a logistics coordination meeting in Barisal. The team will be back in Dhaka on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> December. The next logistics cluster mtg. in Dhaka will be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December where an update will be provided.
- The representative from Concern said that that information should be provided to the union levels for effective coordination; in reality this is not happening. The Chair agreed and said that if all the information could be shared with the local administration the gaps and overfilling could be identified. The ration size of the food package can be known as well.
- UNICEF asked if the food rations distributed are nutritionally adequate or not. WFP said that the SPHERE standard is the norm that all are striving for but that local considerations and needs are also determining rations.
- The UNICEF representative showed their concern regarding the distribution of milk powder to the children of the affected districts. They have drafted a statement for media alerting all that the distribution of milk powder should be stopped immediately.
- UNICEF asked if WFP is providing WSB. The Chair said that yes WFP is going to provide WSB as part of their food package under the EMOP programme.
- WFP asked UNICEF regarding the logistical arrangements of transferring 8,000 MT blended food to the cyclone affected areas. UNICEF agreed that they will discuss the matter bilaterally.

- The Chair informed that the Government of Bangladesh requested the donors to provide them with 500,000 MT of rice. Currently food prices are high in the markets, and international commodity and shipping prices are also very high. The Government has floated international tenders but is not getting very positive results. The oil and the pulse situation is still OK in the country. The Chair also informed that procurement and transportation cost of rice per MT from Bangkok is USD 434, from Vietnam it is USD 390 and from Pakistan it is USD 407.
- WFP said that clear information on food stocks, needs and gaps are needed from GoB to enable the international community to better understand and respond the food security situation. A food balance sheet needs to be prepared which the donors can understand. WFP, IMF, and FAO are joining forces to gather one set of consolidated figures in preparing the food balance sheet. In this regard, Action Aid representative questioned that if the food balance sheet will be acceptable by the government or not. The Chair said that the balance sheet will be prepared by taking information from the government sources.
- The Chair asked if any agency is doing local purchases. Action Aid is doing local purchase but the problem they are facing is transportation of goods to remote areas. In this regard, USAID said that they can provide logistical support through helicopters available through the US Military in coordination with the Bangladesh Armed Forces. USAID requested Action Aid to discuss the issue with them bilaterally and to contact Barisal relief coordination office.
- The representative from Concern said that availability of food commodities in the local markets is a concerning issue.
- UNICEF questioned if the salt being distributed among the beneficiaries is purely iodized or not. WFP answered that a minimum standard is maintained while distributing food package among the beneficiaries.
- Action Aid representative questioned if the baby food being distributed among the children is nutritionally adequate or not. UNICEF replied BP5 that UNICEF is distributing contains all the micronutrients which are essential for children under 5. UNICEF informed that it has requested the donors to supply blended food to them which will also be distributed among the children in the cyclone affected districts.
- Action Aid informed that jointly with UNICEF and SCF-US, it has established 350 child friendly spaces in the affected areas. The representative from Action Aid requested WFP if they can provide nutritious food to the children at these centres. WFP, Action Aid and UNICEF will discuss this issue separately.
- The next Food Cluster meeting will take place on **Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2007 at 11:00 am** at IDB Bhaban Meeting Room 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor).

**Annex-1**

<b>Sl</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>
1	Mr. Douglas Broderick	WFP
2	Mr. Tony Craig	WFP, Bangkok
3	Mr. Gerald Burke	WFP, Rome
4	Mr. Ella Carpenter	WFP, London
5	Mr. John McHarris	WFP
6	Ms. Saori Kitajima	WFP, Bangkok
7	Mr. Kevin Howley	WFP Logistics Cluster
8	Ms. Rehana Banoo	WFP
9	Mr. Monzu Morshed	WFP
10	Mr. Malik Kabir	WFP
11	Ms. Meher Nigar Bhuiyan	WFP
121	Dr. Indrani Chakma	UNICEF
13	Dr. Adriana Zarrelli	UNICEF
14	Mr. Markus Werne	UN OCHA
15	Mr. Carey Gordon	USAID
16	Mr. Matt Nims	USAID
17	Ms. Shahnaz Zakaria	USAID
18	Mr. Oliver Wakelin	Concern Worldwide
19	Mr. M A Wahed	Concern Worldwide
20	Mr. Thomas Preindl	Caritas Austria
21	Mr. Michaela Egger	Caritas, Austria