

Bangladesh Emergency Response to Cyclone SIDR

Draft Minutes of DER WASH Cluster Meeting

Date: 05th December 2007

Venue UNIDP Dhaka

The WASH cluster meeting was held on 05 November 2007 from 1.00 pm to 3.30 pm.

With Richard Luff (UNICEF) as chair.

In attendance; DPHE, Friendship, Action Contre La Faim, Premiere Urgence, Solidarities, Care Bangladesh, Concern, NGO Forum, Oxfam, WHO, DFID, USAID, UNICEF, Proshika, FHI, Action aid, Wateraid, Danida, IFRC.

WASH meeting agenda

1. Draft agenda
2. Introductions
3. Action from last meeting
4. Sub national coordination update
5. Information and communication issues/IM
6. Assessment of urgent needs, water, sanitation and hygiene, which areas. NFIs and assistance (UNDP mail about Gov distribution protocols)
7. Further assessment, monitoring and quality/standards overview
8. Setting up strategic advisory group with focus on recovery
9. AOB

1.0 Draft agenda

No proposed amendments to agenda above

3.0 Action from last meeting

Action; WHO/MoH health cluster to make sure that WASH and shelter clusters are kept informed of disease surveillance information at national and sub national levels.

WHO shared report and WHO gave briefing

Action; The 3 Ws form, (who is doing what where) needs continuous updating.

Some agencies have provided information, but we are still seeking information to make a more complete picture. A modified template has been produced and will be shared after this meeting.

Action Richard Luff to contact agencies bilaterally about technical working groups

Some groups now formed, see below

Action: Richard Luff to discuss with DPHE and other actors in affected area what a sub national coordination mechanism for WASH will look like.

Some move towards this is in hand, see below

Action: national level WASH coordination to occur once per week in Dhaka

This now arranged and in hand

4.0 Sub national coordination update

(please see separate document that provides more details on this)

Specifically the national WASH cluster should undertake the following;

- Encouraging formation of district level WASH meetings, probably on weekly basis.

- Keeping all parties known to be working at district level in touch with each other and having bilateral conversations.
- Ensure key e-mail hubs are identified and used to have rapid information transfer between national, division and district levels and between districts.

WASH meetings are now occurring in Barisal, Bagharat, and South Kali/Sarankhola. Meetings still need to be initiated in Patuakhali, Barguna, Pirojpur and Jalokati.

Action; further UNICEF support required to get some meetings going at district level, to make sure information flows between national WASH cluster and these districts and Upazilas are working

5.0 Information and communication issues/IM

WASH information management focal point Lalit Patra is now being supported by specialist advice from Mr. Paul Currian who is in Bangladesh to support IM for 3 weeks. Lalit remains the contact liaison point.

Two main information collection activities, being carried out by all clusters;

- Assessment coverage to identify which organisation have assessed which areas. *Action agencies asked to let people know about their assessments at end of this meeting*
- Who doing what where, newly agreed cross cluster form, modified from existing one, 3Ws` form will be sent out after this meeting. *Action; can agencies use new form, transferring old information across (many thanks for this extra effort!)*

6.0 Assessment of urgent needs, water, sanitation and hygiene

The question of vulnerability analysis was raised. The meeting was briefed about UNICEF assessment of urgent sanitation needs for temporarily displaced population in Barguna, (1,000 families), Patharghata (500 families), Sarankhola (600 families), Zianaga/Mothbaria (number of families unclear). Oxfam and Care (maybe Islamic Relief and NGO forum) specifically will work in these locations using a mixture of UNICEF and other funds to undertake work here as a priority. The WASH cluster meeting was asked if there were other areas of particular sanitation public health concern and no there were no other suggestions. The situation for those temporarily displaced appears to be in hand, though rate of implementation will be key. However there is increasing concern about sanitation for those who have returned home and more efforts need to be focused on sanitation.

The picture of remaining water scare areas unserved by trucked water is less clear, though some locations have been identified by UNICEF. (see separate report). In addition some remote coastal communities may still not have received assistance, though their situation has always been precarious even before the cyclone. DPHE has been requested by UNICEF to truck water into some of these locations and is seeking additional resources to be able to undertake this. However there is a growing picture of anecdotal information that people are returning to using pond water and demand for trucked water and water from treatment plants is less. The awareness and experience of pond cleaning is mixed, some NGOs need to follow and/or be trained in techniques.

Action NGOs to use DER website and Google group to access DPHE guidance on pond cleaning and follow this. Contact DPHE at district level to get further information

More information is still required to understand how needs are changing and the extent of the outstanding problem.

Action to be followed up

WHO briefing; shared latest figures on diseases (see more detailed reports). Diarrhea remains manageable at this stage though typically in these situations it can start to rise steeply 3 weeks after a large rapid onset event. Vigilance is required. Where possible household water treatment needs to occur for those families that don't have access to tube well water. WHO shared their guidance on household water treatment. There is a need to set up technical working group on this subject.

Action; More focus required on water vulnerable communities.

Action; technical working group set up on household water treatment led by WHO and UNICEF

7.0 Further assessment, monitoring and quality/standards overview

WFP and others will undertake a food and nutrition assessment in coming couple of weeks. The question as asked should the WASH cluster also engage in a reassessment of the situation?

UNICEF briefed the meeting on capacity they hope to bring in (a contracted service) to have a sector wide mechanism for ongoing assessment and activity monitoring. This service should be seen as being useful and available for all actors, from DPHE to NGOs.

The question of need for a reassessment of situation in light of changing circumstances was raised. This matter was referred to the strategy advisory group for consideration.

8.0 Setting up strategic advisory group with focus on recovery

At the WASH national cluster meeting on 5/12/07 the formation of a Strategy Advisory Group (SAG) was discussed, with a meeting to be held after this meeting. The larger agencies such as BRAC, CARE, IFRC/BRCS, NGO Forum, Oxfam, Danida, as well as UNICEF and DPHE because of the scale of their work and their experience are well placed to be core members of this group, though there may be others who should join. The group is not meant to be exclusive but members need to be committed to represent the sector, not their agency and to attend regular rather than deputize to other colleagues. The SAG will be accountable to the main WASH cluster mechanism and will operate as an advisory group, NOT a decision making group.

Action SAG to hold meeting and report back next week to main meeting.

AOB:

None

Next national level WASH cluster meeting 1-2.30 Wed 12th Dec, in UNDP offices,