

## **LCG Sub-group on Disaster and Emergency Response (DER) Minutes of the Meeting held on March 27, 2008**

Mr. A.H.M. Abdullah, Director Planning, Disaster Management Bureau (DMB), MoFDM, Chaired the meeting held on 27 March 2008 at 1400 hrs at CDMP Conference Room at Mahakhali Tran Bhaban. The list of participants as introduced by them is attached as Annex A.

### **MAIN POINTS COVERED AT THE MEETING**

#### **1. Update on Lessons Learnt Process (GoB/CDMP, UN, NGOs/CSOs, Donors/Development Partners):**

**Chair:** The Chair said that the Director General, DMB of the Government has circulated a letter with details regarding organizational review of cyclone Sidr and 2007 Flood operations. After having the reports of the review workshops by various agencies, the Government will set a date for the National Lessons Learned Forum. He also requested DER Secretariat and UNRC office to provide required support where applicable to convene workshops for the Donors and the NGOs.

**WFP:** Updated members on UN Flood and Cyclone 2007 Lessons Learned Workshop for the UN organizations that held on 10 Mar'08. The workshop was structured to address issues relating to: i) What worked well and what did not, ii) Recommendations, and iii) Actions. The output of the workshop was expected to identify the areas where the capacity development within the UN needs to be improved in order to respond to a similar/larger emergency situation. The report of the workshop currently being reconciled by the facilitator is expected to come out next month.

Referred to the DMB letter included in the handouts, WFP mentioned that it is an initiative taken by the Government. The Lessons Learned process diagram also included in the handouts explains which individual agencies are going to have this kind of workshop. After completion of the series of workshops there would be the National Lessons Learned Workshop expected to be held in the month of April 2008.

WFP mentioned that the Government and WFP as DER secretariat and also UNRC office are ready to assist any NGO that would be willing to come forward as lead NGO to organize the NGOs Lessons Learned Workshop on Floods and Cyclone 2007. He asked the NGO partners to contact if interested for organizing such a workshop. These individual workshops need standardization of process in terms of learning and capturing lessons in order to have a useful Lessons Learned Workshop at National level. WFP also asked the Government and the donors about any progress of having Lessons Learned Workshop on Floods and Cyclone 2007.

**OXFAM:** Ms. Nicki Bennett informed that OXFAM has done its internal workshop. Further to that OXFAM, Save the Children Fund and Care have discussed to have a consultant or hiring their own evaluation experts from head quarters to pull together for a desk study. She offered any other NGOs having interest in the process could join. OXFAM also expressed their interest to be the lead NGO in organizing the workshop and they will inform DER Secretariat about it after having discussions with other NGOs in their next meeting to be held very soon.

**ECHO:** Mr. David Hill informed that ECHO has planned to organize lessons learned workshop for the flood with their implementing partners; but they have not heard from other donors of such an exercise.

**DFID:** Ms. Penny Davies informed that DFID already had its internal Lesson Learnt workshop on cyclone, but they did not have discussions with any other bilateral Donors about it. She appreciated the initiative to have a consolidated workshop, which would be meaningful to reduce fragmentation of efforts in future. She requested UN to convene the Donor agencies for organizing this workshop. She also mentioned that DFID sent a letter to UNRC office requesting to reactivate the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) to convene same kind of lessons learned workshop as preparedness for the next risky hazardous season.

**Action:**

- WFP as the Secretariat of DER will talk with the UNRC office to convene Donors Lessons Learned Workshop.
- DER Secretariat will also serve as a receiver and in turn disseminate the individual agency reports of Lessons Learned Workshops. It will also upload these reports on the DER website, and make them available to DMIC for uploading to DMIC website.

**2. Review of regularity of DER Meetings and priorities for the next few months:**

**Chair:** The Chair mentioned that the Director General of DMB presides over the DER meetings on adhoc basis. We have to fix the resource person who will preside over the meeting only then the participation of other line ministries could be ensured.

**WFP:** Informed that on paper the Secretary of the MoFDM is the Chair but in practice he normally delegates it to Director General of DMB. Also informed that there were some discussions within the Government that the Secretary of MoFDM could permanently delegate the Chair to DG DMB as the DER objectives match DMB's coordination responsibilities. WFP emphasized on regular meeting of DER group from now on so that it can focus on the preparedness for next monsoon season. In past, the meeting was held once in a month. WFP suggested having the meeting on a monthly basis and will be scheduled on first Wednesday of the month.

**CDMP:** Mr. Ian Rector said that the DER has to be totally integrated within the Government system and that doesn't mean change within this forum but it means Government has to take the responsibility. One of the main objectives is to ensure that Government is taking the leadership role.

**UNICEF:** Mr. Zulfikur Ali Khan remarked that DER meeting is not a kind of formalities that we would do on a monthly basis but it is important to ensure that a good coordination will build up among the stakeholders through this DER meeting. The participation of significant line ministries like – DPHE, Agriculture, Nutrition, Health etc. in the meeting is also very important. A good mechanism of response could not be ensured without the presence of the relevant people in the meeting. He requested the Government either the ministry or DMB to take the initiative and ensure their presence in the meeting.

**OXFAM:** Ms. Nicki Bennett added that regularity of the meeting in a timely basis is important. She emphasized that the representation of the right people in the meeting is also very important.

**Action:**

- The DER meeting will be held on a monthly basis, tentatively it would be held on the first Wednesday of the month subject to availability of Director General of DMB.

**3. Opportunities for DER members to support GoB priorities:**

**WFP:** Shared some points of the Draft National Plan for Disaster Management 2007-2015, which was included in the handout. He mentioned that this document is a relevant reference document in terms of knowing what the Government priorities are.

**CDMP:** Said that the National Plan was developed to give some sort of strategic guidance for the country. All line ministries and about 64 agencies were involved in developing this document. Also said this document is not only a Disaster Management Plan but it is a strategic plan for the Government, which needs to be reviewed regularly. This is an area where DER group can contribute.

**Action:**

- DER members were requested to go through the document and give their valuable input to it.

**4. Revised Coordination Structure for SIDR Transitional Working Groups**

**WFP:** Mentioned that this agenda is more specific to the ongoing cyclone response and early recovery. The UNRC office is playing more active role on this. WFP requested RC office to provide an update.

**UNRCO:** Mr. Rune Brandrup gave a short brief on SIDR Transitional Working Groups and their activities. He referred the draft ToR, which was included in the handouts as reference. He mentioned about the Coordination Forum for these groups, which meets twice a month. In this forum representation from International and National NGO is needed for better participation. He requested to select one International NGO and one National NGO representative to participate in the Coordination Forum.

**OXFAM:** Said that it would be difficult to select one NGO and proposed to have 2 or 3 representatives on behalf of the international NGOs who would alternately or rotationally participate in the meeting.

**Action:**

- UNRC office will raise this issue to be discussed in the upcoming Coordination meeting, which will be held on 30 April'08, Sunday. Care, OXFAM and IFRC will participate in this meeting.

## 5. Status of Early Action Recovery Plan (EARP)

**Chair:** The Chair informed the group that the Early Recovery Action Plan will be circulated to the DER members through the Secretariat as soon as it is endorsed by the Secretary.

Extensive discussions were held on shelter issue; the emergency shelter coverage in the SIDR affected areas, the remaining gap in transitional shelter coverage, the need for standardization of the shelter, and the need for awareness raising training on cyclone/flood resistant building techniques.

**OXFAM:** Pointed out that there are a significant number of families in the affected area who are still not covered in any shelter program. She shared a one page document on shelter coverage in response to cyclone SIDR, prepared by the Shelter Coordination Cluster. The representative placed a question to the DER members whether there is any plan of addressing these needs immediately.

**ECHO:** Shared that they found difficulties with the local level Government while implementing the shelter response with the shelter design.

**DFID:** Commented that clear message needs to go down to the district level and requested UNRC office to discuss the issue at higher level of the Government. DFID further mentioned that the British High Commissioner had already requested UNRC office earlier about the issue but they have not yet received any comments from them.

**WFP:** Suggested that UNRC office could pass on the message to higher level of the Government to express the concern about the lack of resource mobilization for the people who need shelter assistance. The main concern is that the Early Recovery Action Plan does not adequately acknowledge the needs. WFP also suggested that the shelter group can have dialogues with UNRC office with specific issues and that would help to find out a solution to solve the problem.

**UNRCO:** Mentioned that this concern had already been shared with the GoB.

**CDMP:** Said that in a cluster meeting at UNDP, they also suggested to organize a meeting with the technical people of different Government institutions for standardization of the shelter assistance and requested to circulate a GO to all districts after finalizing it.

## 6. Any Other Business –

### a. Information Management Initiatives

**WFP:** Mentioned the concerns about Information Management, which was very useful sometimes during emergency response but in many cases is lacking. He informed that Craig Williams, an Information Management professional from OCHA, Bangkok is coming to Dhaka on 06 April'08. He will have meeting with the Heads of various clusters, and other stakeholders with an aim to see improved Information Management during emergencies and also from a DER information preparedness perspective. WFP is preparing the schedule of Mr. Craig Williams during the period of

06 April'08 to 10 April'08. If any organization/NGO is interested to share their views on information management during emergencies mostly on recent experience of cyclone – about how things could be improved in getting access of information, will be appreciated to contact with WFP to have the schedule of Mr. Craig.

**b. Nutrition Initiative:**

**UNICEF:** As the nutrition cluster lead UNICEF shared the information on nutrition initiative undertaken by their organization. This has particular relevance to recovery sector. They are reviewing the needs of nutrition cluster coordination and what are the existing structures and the potentials of the country. They are trying to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the nutrition sector particularly to respond in an emergency. They are looking into the obligations of standards that we need to harmonize the development of assessment tools – whether it is only relevant to data collection or it is also relevant to preparedness, availability of data and information sharing. This review will take place over a period of 3 weeks. They had an initial meeting with all the actors of nutrition sector. A debriefing would be held on 2 April'08 at the Institute of Public Health.

**c. Other Concerns:**

**UNICEF:** Raised a concern on earthquake. As there was no discussion on earthquake, the DER members are unaware that there is a DER forum on earthquake issues Chaired by DMB. UNICEF requested the Chair to have some discussion on earthquake in future. The Chair informed that the *National Disaster Day* is going to be celebrated on 31 March'08. The main theme of the day is “Build safer house, reduce the risk of earthquake.”

**CDMP:** Mentioned that DER had formed a number of sub-committees to deal with number of issues. She also mentioned the good things that DER has done in past few years like – development of emergency need assessment tools, developing checklists for gender and diversity issues and standardization of relief packages. But we are still behind to have the benefits from those achievements. Main concern is the sub-committees or the small working/thematic groups are no longer functioning. DER since has started the initiatives and now it's the time to take it forward by proper activation of these groups.

**Actions:**

- DER secretariat will make DG DMB aware on the issue “Reactivation of the small groups” and will put it as an agenda in next DER meeting.

**d. Rat Situation in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT):**

**UNRCO:** Shared that one assessment has been done by UNDP and WFP. He inquired if any other organizations have planned to initiate any program in the CHT in response to the Rat crisis.

**ECHO:** Informed that they will have a meeting on 31 Mar'08 on the issue and have planned to visit the area on 1 Apr'08.

**WFP:** Informed that USAID is planning to organize an assessment on the rat situation in CHT scheduled in April 2008.

**UNICEF and Save the Children:** They have already completed the assessment and will share the report after completion.

**e. Next DER meeting:**

The next DER meeting will be held on the first Wednesday, 7 May 2008 at 14:00 hrs at CDMP Conference Room (6<sup>th</sup> floor) subject to availability of Director General of Disaster Management Bureau (DMB).

The meeting ended with thanks to the Chair and to all participants.

**ANNEX A: ATTENDANCE LIST of DER Meeting held on March 27, 2008**

| <b>Agencies</b> | <b>Sl</b> | <b>Name</b>              | <b>Organization</b>   |
|-----------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| GoB             | 1         | Mr. A H M Abdullah       | DMB                   |
|                 | 2         | Mr. Ian Rector           | CDMP                  |
|                 | 3         | Ms. Shantana Halder      | CDMP                  |
|                 | 4         | Mr. Md. Shahidul Islam   | CDMP                  |
| Donors          | 5         | Ms. Penny Davies         | DFID                  |
|                 | 6         | Mr. David Hill           | ECHO                  |
|                 | 7         | Ms. Janett Kampf         | German Embassy        |
| UN              | 8         | Mr. Chris Baker          | FAO                   |
|                 | 9         | Mr. Rune Brandrup        | UNRCO                 |
|                 | 10        | Ms. Rumana Khan          | UNRCO                 |
|                 | 11        | Mr. James S. Barron      | UNICEF                |
|                 | 12        | Ms. Pauline Mwaniki      | UNICEF                |
|                 | 13        | Dr. Mirza Mashrur Ahmed  | UNICEF                |
|                 | 14        | Ms. Silvia Kaufmann      | UNICEF                |
|                 | 15        | Mr. Zulfikur Ali Khan    | UNICEF                |
|                 | 16        | Dr. Md. Enamul Haque     | WHO                   |
|                 | 17        | Dr. Md. Zahidur Rahim    | WHO                   |
|                 | 18        | Mr. John McHarris        | WFP                   |
|                 | 19        | Ms. Rehana Banoo         | WFP                   |
| NGOs            | 20        | Ms. Cecile Leemaus       | ACF                   |
|                 | 21        | Mr. Chitta Ranjan Biswas | CARE                  |
|                 | 22        | Ms. Laetitia Weibel      | IRD                   |
|                 | 23        | Mr. Roman Majcher        | OXFAM                 |
|                 | 24        | Ms. Nicki Bennett        | OXFAM                 |
|                 | 25        | Ms. Erica Khetran        | Save the Children     |
|                 | 26        | Mr. Md. Ruhul Amin       | Save the Children     |
|                 | 27        | Mr. Alex T Sen           | Swiss Red Cross       |
|                 | 28        | Mr. Daniel Alain         | Solidarities          |
| DER Secretariat | 29        | Mr. Malik Kabir          | DER Secretariat (WFP) |
|                 | 30        | Ms. Nusrat Shahrin Urmi  | DER Secretariat (WFP) |