

Meeting of the DER Sub-Group

9 February 2005

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Charlie Higgins, WFP Disaster Adviser.

The attendance list is at Annex A.

The Chair brought to the attention of the DER members the unexpected passing of their colleague, Mr. Hasan Ali of CEGIS, and the group spent a moment in reflection.

MAIN POINTS COVERED AT THE MEETING

Issues Raised in the Minutes of Previous Meetings:

- Earthquake Preparedness, discussed at DER Sub-Group meeting on 05 Jan 05:
 - Following concerns that Bangladesh is not yet ready to face future major disasters – particularly earthquakes or tsunamis – it was suggested that an inventory of all relevant disaster preparedness initiatives is prepared. The DER Secretariat would seek input and combine it into a matrix for dissemination amongst sub-group members.
 - The DER Secretariat would ask Mr. Graham Tyrie if the ‘Earthquake Gap Analysis’ undertaken by the EC in 2004 can be shared. JICA and ActionAid have also completed similar analyses, and all findings should be combined so that their recommendations can be prioritised for action.
 - It was suggested that the DER Sub-Group should revitalise its Earthquake Preparedness Working Group to undertake these tasks. Members should include key agencies active in this area, such as USAID, JICA, ActionAid, BDPC, CARE, Concern, and Oxfam.
- Gender and Diversity in Disasters DER Working Group meeting on 11 Jan 05:
 - The working group has determined that its mission is to sensitize and educate DER members to be able to address gender and diversity issues appropriately.
 - It will serve as an advisory group to the main DER Sub-Group. The WG will produce a checklist to raise the most important issues and identify the main areas where agencies should take a gender perspective. This may ultimately form the basis of a ‘DER Gender and Diversity Standard’ against which agencies can measure their performance in all stages of the disaster cycle, but particularly in response, e.g. WatSan. The WG will consult with members and share the first draft of the checklist with the wider group in March.
 - A deadline of May was set to review the assessment forms used by DER in the 2004 floods for their gender and diversity sensitivity and to amend them as appropriate.

Weather forecast and any new emergency situations and response:

- Lower than normal rainfall does not seem to have had any major impact yet.
- Concern provided relief items to 900 families affected by a market fire in Khulna City.
- There has not been a severe ‘Cold Wave’ this year, although increased diarrhoeal diseases had been reported in the Northwest in early January.
- There is an outbreak of Nipah virus in Tangail, and ICDDR-B and the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Atlanta, are investigating its spread.

Discussion of Disaster Management Issues in the PRSP:

- The Chair informed the sub-group about the GoB presentation of its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) on Thu 10 Feb 05. The LCG sub-groups have to submit comments to the Executive LCG by 17 Feb 05, which will consolidate comments for the Planning Commission by the end of the month. A short section (½ a page) on disaster management will be included in the submission from the LCG Thematic Group on Rural Development.
- CDMP confirmed that it had received and commented on a full draft of the PRSP in early December, and they would share their submission with the DER members. They had recommended that comprehensive disaster management should be on the agenda for the Medium Term Strategic Plan and that consequently it should be reflected in the ‘PRS Framework’ Flowchart on page 11. Although CDMP had succeeded in including Disaster Impact Risk Assessments (DIRA), the recommendation about the flowchart had been missed so it was a good opportunity for DER members to revisit the draft.
- Other participants commented on aspects of the draft PRSP, finding its focus on disaster management issues too narrow with many areas requiring improvement, for instance the fact that it had considered flood risks but not cyclones and earthquakes. Climate change was also not emphasised as major concern. Some felt that the treatment of disasters in the Interim PRSP had been more holistic and clearer as a guiding policy document.
- All comments and suggestions for the PRSP should be e-mailed to the DER Secretariat by 0900 hours on 10 Feb 05, so that they can be presented in the meeting on the same day.

The Secretariat had subsequently received members’ input as requested. It had highlighted a number of issues that had been raised in this DER meeting, and these were included in the consolidated comments submitted by the LCG Thematic Group on Rural Development.

Presentation of draft DER Flood 2004 Lesson Learning Workshop Report:

- Mr. Sanaul Mustafa, lead facilitator of the workshop, had submitted a draft report and Charlie Higgins has started working on it. He hoped that by the end of February members would have had a chance to comment on it so that the report could be finalised and printed.
- The Logical Framework Analysis undertaken at the workshop will be an important start-point for drafting the DER work-plan for this year. The first draft should be shared at the DER meeting in March.

The Secretariat should have the draft Lessons Learned Workshop Report circulated for comment by the end of the month, but the draft work-plan would not be ready by 02 Mar.

- CDMP proposed that when the work-plan was finalised, CDMP, MoFDM and the DER Facilitator Group should meet and discuss how they can work productively to achieve its objectives together. DER should also evaluate its overall role and strategy *vis à vis* GoB.
- It was also suggested that the sub-group rotate its meeting venues, which met with general approval. The Ministry (DMB) would welcome the opportunity to host the next meeting, as it was an opportunity to bring together the management of DMB and the DER Group. Although DER was focused more on response, with the new DG of DMB there was a desire for GoB to take a more proactive role in disaster management, and this will lead to greater interaction and cooperation between the two entities to undertake what is in fact a huge task. The sub-group members welcomed the opportunity for increased cooperation, which was what they had called for at the Lessons Learned Workshop in December.

In future the DER Sub-Group would alternate its meeting venues between IDB Bhaban and suitable facilities in other member agency premises.

World Conference on Disaster Reduction (18-22 Jan 05, Kobe, Japan):

Briefing by Ms. Dilruba Haider (UNDP), Mr. Nojibur Rahman (CDMP), and Ms. Wahida Bashir Ahmed (ActionAid) who were amongst the 13 Bangladesh delegates at the conference.

The World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) attracted 4,000 participants from 191 countries, with 17 government ministers and 176 official delegations, plus 161 NGOs, 78 UN Agencies and observer organisations, and 562 journalists. Its overall objectives were to raise the international profile of disaster risk reduction; promote its integration into development planning and practice; and to strengthen capacities to mitigate disaster impacts. It was held from 18 to 22 January in Kobe, coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake.

WCDR was divided into 3 segments:

I. The Inter-Governmental Segment considered two outcome documents, with Bangladesh one of the 44 members of the drafting committee. Negotiations were held on the Hyogo Declaration – Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, and the Hyogo Framework For Action 2005-2015; as well as reviewing the 1994 Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World. The Framework outlined 3 strategic goals:

- Integration of disaster risk into sustainable development policies;
- Strengthening institutions; and
- Risk reduction approaches incorporated into emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes.

The key priorities for action 2005-2015 are:

- Ensuring that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis;
- Identifying, monitoring and assessing disaster risks and enhancing early warning;
- Building a culture of safety and resilience;
- Reducing underlying risk factors; and
- Strengthening disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

II. The Thematic Segment discussed the priorities for action 2005-2012 in 5 thematic clusters:

- Governance, institutional, assessment, monitoring and early warning;
- Risk identification, assessment, monitoring and early warning;
- Knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience;
- Reducing the underlying risk factors; and
- Preparedness for effective response.

III. Alongside the two segments was an exhibition and The Public Forum, which consisted of hundreds of workshops.

The main contentious issues at WCDR were:

- Definition of the scope of hazards to be addressed – whether to include ‘technological’ and environmental hazards as well as so-called natural ones. In the end they did.
- Linking climate change with disaster risk – USA wanted this reference removed from the declaration, with support from Canada, Iran and India. This was successfully opposed by EU member states and other countries.

- Cross-border concerns about disasters, such as the management of river basins through enhanced regional cooperation, was opposed by Turkey but strongly supported by Bangladesh, and was ultimately retained in the declaration.
- There was a suggestion to add another Millennium Development Goal – to reduce number of deaths of disaster victims by half – but this was not adopted.
- The lack of financial resources and the absence of real commitments from donors was criticised, and there was a suggestion to create a special global fund to help poor disaster-prone countries set up national risk reduction strategies.
- No monitoring plan was drawn up, although the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) was given responsibility to produce indicators so that states could track progress towards the goals set at Kobe. Unfortunately many delegates were concerned that the declarations should not be made binding and the closing statement was very reconciliatory. INGOs were concerned that not much will actually change.
- Special sessions were held on the Indian Ocean Tsunami, although they did not overshadow the conference.

Copies of the Hyogo Declaration and Framework For Action were distributed at the meeting. The Chair reminded CDMP to try to obtain a copy of the report submitted by GoB to the conference, for dissemination amongst members.

After his well-received presentation at WCDR on 'Living with Risk', the Minister is keen to share outcomes at a national seminar, and look at ways to implement the declaration and the framework, such as the launch of a national platform for disaster reduction.

Any Other Business:

- Mariko Hattori gave an overview of the status of Secretariat's ongoing work, as follows:
 - The draft DER work-plan for 2005 will follow the DER Lessons Learned Workshop Report, which will be circulated shortly.
 - In response to a question from the UNDP Webmaster, the sub-group confirmed that it did want to keep posting the minutes of its meetings on the LCG Bangladesh website.
 - The DER e-mail list was too long and resulted in many failure reports. It would be corrected and shortened, but if any sub-group member was inadvertently removed from the list they should inform the Secretariat.
 - On earthquake preparedness the Secretariat will try to assemble a set of the various 'gap analyses' and then bring together key agencies to make a plan.
 - More meetings were needed to review the assessment forms and other aspects of the assessment work conducted in 2004, but they could not take place during February.
 - There had been an effort to bring together an *ad hoc* group of members to look at DER's advocacy role, but no one had met yet. A concept paper on DER advocacy was awaited from the WFP Advocacy Section. The Chair felt that since the whole DER Sub-Group should engage in advocacy what was needed was an overall DER advocacy policy, indicating what to advocate and how.
- The sub-group endorsed the Secretariat's proposal to have an information sharing session for anyone interested in lessons from the Asian Tsunami disaster, on Wed 16 Sep.
- A second DFID review team will arrive on 20 Feb, tasked to assess DFID's overall response to the floods in 2004 (totalling £29 million) and its impact. The outcomes of the review could change DFID's disaster response procedures.
- The National Disaster Preparedness Day in late March is no longer part of the official Government calendar. It was proposed that DER should organise something to replace it.

Next DER Meetings:

- The DER information sharing session on the Asian Tsunami disaster will take place at 1400 hours on Wed 16 Sep, in the 17th floor UN conference room at IDB Bhaban. There will be presentations on Sri Lanka (by Oxfam), Thailand and the Maldives (by ActionAid), and Indonesia (by WFP). Attendees will need to confirm their attendance by responding to an e-mail invitation.
- The main DER meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of each month, unless otherwise stated. Therefore the next full meeting of the DER Sub-Group will be on Wed 02 Mar 05 at 1400 hrs, in the DRR Conference Room, on the 1st floor of the DMB Office in Mohakhali. Suggestions for other new meeting venues will be considered.

DER Sub-Group Secretariat

25 February 2005

ANNEXES

Attendance List

Annex A**ATTENDANCE LIST**

Serial	Name	Organisation
1	Ms. Wahida Bashar Ahmed	ActionAid Bangladesh
2	Mr. Shaheen Mahmud	AusAID
3	Ms. Shantana R. Halder	CDMP
4	Mr. Abdul Latif Khan	CDMP
5	Mr. Md. Nojibur Rahman	CDMP
6	Mr. Ian Rector	CDMP
7	Mr. Monzu Morshed	CARE
8	Ms. Tanja Haque	Christian Aid
9	Mr. Ashutosh Dey	Concern
10	Mr. Panka J. Kumar	Concern
11	Mr. Duncan King	DFID
12	Mr. Anwar Hossain	ECHO
13	Mr. Rajendra Anyal	FAO
14	Mr. Samir Kumar Bose	GoB – Ministry of Information
15	Mr. Sameer Abdul Wahid	IIRD
16	Mr. Nurul Amin Bagur	Islamic Relief
17	Ms. Nahreen Farjana	IOM Dhaka
18	Mr. Takuya Sugawara	JICA
19	Mr. Chowdhury Sabbir Hasan	SCF-USA
20	Ms. Armana Ahmed	ICDDR,B
21	Ms. Dilruba Haider	UNDP
22	Mr. A. K. Masood Ahmed	UNICEF
23	Mr. Maksudar Rahman	World Vision Bangladesh
24	Mr. Nazrul Ahasan	WHO
25	Dr. M. Mizamur Rahman	WHO
26	Ms. Rehana Banoo	WFP [DER Secretariat]
27	Ms. Mariko Hattori	WFP [DER Secretariat]
28	Mr. Charlie Higgins	WFP [DER Secretariat]
29	Mr. Malik Kabir	WFP [DER Secretariat]