

**LCG Sub-group on Disaster and Emergency Response (DER)
Minutes of the Meeting held on February 7, 2007**

Mr. John McHarris, Adviser, DPR section, WFP chaired the meeting. The list of participants as introduced by themselves is attached as Annex A.

MAIN POINTS COVERED AT THE MEETING

1. Adoption of the minutes of the last meeting held on 6 December 2006:

In response to DFID's query, the Chair briefed on the discussion held between DER Secretariat and MoFDM on the issues of DER Chair and the Secretariat. As per an earlier meeting the DER secretariat met with the Secretary, MoFDM along with his team consisting of one Joint Secretary and two Deputy Secretaries, and the Deputy Team Leader of CDMP. Both WFP and GoB share a common view that the GoB should play a more central and active role with regards to DER activities. Having the GoB as the Chair and having the meetings at GoB buildings (DMB, DRR) would help develop a tighter integration of the efforts of the group and the GoB towards risk reduction. The discussion also focused on how this transition would take place. The GoB prefers that WFP retain the secretariat role, to be reviewed later in the year and take the role of a Chair initially for full one-year period. The secretariat also reminded the GoB that the issue of DER Chair and the venue for the meetings are usually discussed annually in line with LCG guidelines.

The minutes were adopted without any modification.

2. Situation Monitoring and Response Update by agencies, if any:

DER Secretariat:

The DER Secretariat has regularly compiled all the response interventions received from different sources in response to recent cold wave to support improved coordination. As of date, nine emergency response matrix updates and other reports (including WFP Sub Office reports) have been circulated to the DER members for sharing information on who is doing what and where for informed decision-making.

Concern Universal- Concern Universal sent an update to DER Secretariat to be included in the next Cold Wave Response Matrix update prepared by the DER Secretariat.

Islamic Relief- Islamic Relief, Oxfam and Concern Worldwide through the ECHO funding organized a Press Conference at Reporters Unity Hall on 31 January 2007 on Water logging in South West.

SCF-Sweden- They have distributed 4,000 blankets and 8,000 sweaters and some medicines to 4 districts through their NGO partners. They have been requested to send their information to DER secretariat for updating the Cold Wave Response Matrix.

ADRA-They reported about a hailstorm that occurred at the Southern part of Bangladesh, which damaged some paddy fields. ADRA was requested to send more information on this event to DER secretariat, if they have any.

DFID-They thanked DER Secretariat for their excellent work in compiling the cold wave response interventions done by different agencies. As per the request of their Ambassador as well as their Head Quarters, DFID needed some specific information on cold wave response interventions all over the country particularly in Sylhet region. They thanked DER Secretariat for their timely support in catering their information needs.

Action:

- a. The members were requested to remain vigilant and report any changing situation.

3. UN Humanitarian Reform Initiative:

The Chair informed that some discussions and presentations on UN Humanitarian issues were done in couple of earlier DER meetings. In order to enhance the DER members' awareness of the importance of this initiative, Mr. John McHarris made a presentation to update the participants on this reform initiative in the light of recent developments.

The main points are summarized below:

- UN Emergency Response Coordinator, Under-Secretary General Humanitarian Affairs, commissioned the Humanitarian Reform initiative study in 2005. The key finding of the study is that Emergency response to large-scale disasters needs to be more efficient and effective, predictable, accountable and better coordinated.
- Cluster group is the same as sector group with one difference that in the cluster group, more emphasis is put on emergency preparedness and coordinated response. The Cluster Approach is implemented through the Inter Agency Steering Committee (IASC). At the Country level, the government is the central lead authority regarding humanitarian response. Mr. John McHarris of WFP and Mr. Tarik ul Islam of UNDP attended a meeting hosted by OCHA at Bangkok in the last week of January 2007. Different UN humanitarian agencies along with IFRC and other NGOs attended this meeting. The issues discussed in this meeting include the implementation of this initiative at HQ and at Country level, relationship with the GoB, capacity building of the GoB counterparts particularly the line ministries etc. The meeting also focused on the Bangladesh specific issues and has agreed that the implementation to be done through DER rather than UNDMT, as DER already has a stakeholders platform and is considered convenient to support this initiative.
- The status of the implementing clusters is still in early stages in Bangladesh. The lead agencies have been nominated. Generic Terms of Reference for the Cluster leads have been developed; tools and checklists are available to check the clusters preparedness and response capacity.
- In Bangladesh there are 13 Clusters that includes of Logistics, Emergency Telecommunications, Emergency shelter, Health, Nutrition, WATSON, Early Recovery, Protection/Reintegration and Camp Management, Food, Agriculture, Search and Rescue and Education. The Lead agencies are: WFP, UNICEF, UNHCR, IFRC, WHO, UNDP, FAO, OCHA, UNRC respectively.
- At the global level, there are 10 Clusters that includes of Logistics, Emergency, Telecommunications, Emergency Shelter, Health, Nutrition, Water/Sanitation, Early Recovery, Protection, Camp Coordination and Management etc. The Lead agencies are WFP, OCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR, IFRC, WHO, UNDP, IOM respectively.
- The next steps/issues are to implement this initiative through the DER forum as this has been considered as more inclusive and more established rather than UNDMT. The Cluster leads are to be finalized with the UN Heads of Agencies and the UN Resident Coordinator. This has to be officially launched at GoB. The reference documents and tools are to be made available via LCG DER website.

In the subsequent discussions following issues were raised:

- ECHO questioned if the Cluster Leads are to be finalized through any workshops. The senior government officials are to be made aware of this initiative. In this regard, UN Resident Coordinator is to meet with the government officials. The final step is to make the Cluster Leads understand their roles properly. They can then directly approach their cluster members to be a part of their respective cluster.

- In response to a question by Concern Universal, DER Secretariat replied that there is one generic ToR developed by HQ for Cluster Leads at Country level. This indicates what the clusters leads are responsible for. Each cluster leads need to customize them according to their needs. These documents are available at www.reliefweb.int/humanitarianreform.
- DFID questioned if only the UN Humanitarian agencies could be the Cluster Lead. DER Secretariat replied that this is not limited to UN humanitarian agencies only, under special circumstances other agencies like IFRC, IOM could be the Cluster Leads as well. UNDMT team within the UN is the coordinating body on disaster related issues. It has been collectively agreed that the implementation of this initiative is to be done through DER forum.

4. Marginalized groups during disaster response:

CARE Bangladesh: An oral presentation was made on inclusion of marginalized groups during disaster response. Under the Shouhardo Programme, CARE responded to the recent cold wave particularly targeting the marginalized groups that includes the Injecting Drug Users, Sex Workers and their children. CARE found out that these marginalized groups were being neglected and their needs were not considered. They tried to understand their needs and distributed sweaters, blankets to the affected marginalized groups through their Drop-in-centers (DICs), Self Help Groups etc. The main focus of the presentation was to consider the needs of the marginalized groups and to provide them with adequate support during any disaster response.

DER Secretariat: They informed about the Gender and Diversity Working Group where CARE is one of the members. The RIR and RENA form was given to the presenter for her to know that information on the marginalized groups are derived during disasters by using this form.

CDMP: They informed that during any disaster response the government of Bangladesh also takes into consideration the marginalized groups but it is not always possible for the GoB to reach to all the affected people, as the number is too big

5. Any Other Business:

CDMP: They are going to organize a number of workshops in the next couple of months. These include launching the new version of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), lessons learnt workshop on the October 2006 storm at Bay of Bengal and the recent Cold Wave in January 2007 etc. The dates of these workshops are yet to be finalized. Interested persons can directly contact CDMP for more information on these workshops.

DER Secretariat: With a view to strengthen the capacity of the District Information Focal Points (DIFPs), WFP in close collaboration with CDMP is going to organize Disaster Risk Management (DRM) workshop from 25 February to 1 March 2007 at the Human Resource Development Centre, Koitta, Manikganj.

DER Annual Strategic Meeting:

The next DER Annual Strategic meeting is proposed tentatively for **Wednesday, 14 March** at 10:00 hrs at IDB Bhaban 3rd floor.

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

ANNEX A: ATTENDANCE LIST of DER Meeting held on 7 February 2007

Organisations	Sl	Name	Organization
GoB	1	Dr. Aslam Alam	CDMP
Donors	2	Mr. Johny Sarker	DFID
	3	Mr. Abdul Awal	ECHO
	4	Mr. Ranadhir K. Das	IFRC
UN	5	Mr. Rune Brandrup	UNDP
	6	Mr. Md. Tarik-ul-Islam	UNDP
	7	Mr. B M M Mozharul Huq	UNDP
	8	Dr. Zahidur Rahim	WHO
	9	Mr. John McHarris	WFP
	10	Ms. Rehana Banoo	WFP, DPR
	11	Mr. Monzu Morshed	WFP, DPR
	12	Ms. Farhana Pinky	WFP, Field Coordination
	NGOs	13	Mr. Sajid Raihan
14		Mr. Simson Halder	ADRA-Bangladesh
15		Mr. Monirul Hassan	BDRCS
16		Mr. M Rob Choudhury	BRAC
17		Mr. Tapan Kumar Brahma	BRAC
18		Ms. Laila Khowdkar	CARE
19		Mr. Arnest A. Sarkar	CCDB
20		Ms. Claudia Amaral	Concern Universal
21		Mr. Evan Shahrier	Concern Universal
22		Ms. Fanin Arnold	German Embassy
23		Mr. Md. Abdur Rahman	Handicap International
24		Ms. Jane Mbale	IIRD
25		Mr. Md. Maksudur Rahman	Islamic Relief
26		Mr. Md. Atiq Uz Zaman	Save the Children-Sweden, Denmark
DER Secretariat	27	Ms. Meher Nigar Bhuiyan	DER Secretariat (WFP)
	28	Ms. Raushan Ara Begum	DER Secretariat (WFP)

Minutes recorded and circulated by: DER Secretariat