

Meeting of the DER Sub-Group

01 June 2005

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Douglas Casson Coutts, WFP Country Representative.

The attendance list is at Annex A.

The Chair announced the arrival of Nick Russell, WFP consultant, who will work mainly on updating contingency plans for WFP and support DPR Section for DER Sub-group, and will help address urgent priorities resulting from the departure of Charlie Higgins, WFP Advisor for Disaster Preparedness and Response.

MAIN POINTS COVERED AT THE MEETING

Minutes of previous meeting:

The following meeting minutes were adopted without any changes:

- DER Sub-Group Meeting (04 May 05)

Current Emergency Situations:

- As to Moulvibazaar flash flooding, no response was made by DER members; BWDB is working on breached embankments.
- Flood Forecasting and Warning Center has started producing the daily bulletin on river level data with a brief narrative since 26 May.

Recapitulate the main events in the evolution of 2004 Floods:

- Rehana Banoo, DER Secretariat revisited the timeline of events during floods 2004, referring to the Floods 2004 Lessons Learned Workshop Report. In July DER was still concentrating on Haor flash flood situation. Some of the milestones were Inter-Ministerial Coordination Meeting in 3rd week, and UN-DMT in 4th week of July. DER was very active in 2nd half of July. Activities increased as are given in the timeline of events.
- Based on the lessons learned from the floods 2004 some preparatory work has started for the next major event. One of the works undertaken is to look at the DER assessment tools by Assessment Working Group.

Pre-flood Preparedness Measures:

- Early Warning / Monitoring:
 - CEGIS will commence its map of the river situation (based on FFWC data and satellite photos) from mid June 2005. The Institute For Water Modelling aims for 10-15 day forecasting, but at present still only possible 3 days ahead. The information will be circulated by the Secretariat by e-mail to the DER members as it receives it.
- Reporting from the Assessment Working Group:
 - It was suggested that DER should nominate a focal NGO at ground level in each district, which should report to the Secretariat the initial situation within 48 hrs using a simple format and assessment reporting forms. Based on the reports situation reports should be made. In case of a worsening situation, DER should be able to field

assessment teams on Day 5 of the onset of the disaster for a 5-day mission for the assessment of an initial impact and multi-sectoral response needs. The assessment should identify not only damages but also what assistance the actual most needy population will need, and for how long.

The formats for assessment are not totally fine-tuned yet, but are available to go with it.

- Systematic Information Sharing:

- It would be easier if a common format is used for information sharing among DER Group. However, it has been difficult to get the information back from a member agency when the Secretariat circulates a common form to request information. At this stage without a format, the Secretariat will try to process member agency's own report into a matrix.
- It was proposed at the DER Lessons Learned Workshop that regional focal points for gathering and sharing information should be nominated. It was suggested that this communication line should be organized prior to the next flood.

The Secretariat shall try to map the relative strengths of agencies, in consultation with DER facilitators' group as appropriate, so that we can look to them to facilitate information sharing and coordination at district levels.

- Status of DER Group Roster:

- The Secretariat was tasked to update the DER Stand-by Needs Assessment Roster. The draft was disseminated and responses were received. The people in the roster are not always centrally based. In theory they should be available for management and implementation of response activities, but given the different profiles and levels of these people, they will perforce take a number of different roles – not just technical work, but also assessment, and management roles. Many of these people could lead teams, using the TORs that were defined last year.

The Secretariat shall revisit the ToR for the Assessment Team and update as appropriate.

- Reconstitute the DER Sectoral Working Groups and assignment of specific tasks:

- It was suggested that a meeting of the Chairs of the Sectoral Working Groups should be convened, to define their tasks prior to the next flood.
- It was requested that the Sectoral Working Groups must take a broader approach and are not just focused mono-sectorally, but bring in a number of agencies, people and perspectives.

The Secretariat shall contact the chairs of the working groups to initiate the process of preparation.

- Staff support to the Secretariat:

- During the flood 2004, the Secretariat mostly relied on volunteers in an attempt to meet the high expectation from the member agencies, because as agencies moved into their own response, they could not afford to loan staff to DER Secretariat on a full or part time basis. Expectations on Secretariat can only be realized if the members support it at moments of high demand. Currently the DER Secretariat staff resources are slender. Although Secretariat plans to increase the number of staff, it will not meet the expectations in the midst of a major emergency. Secretariat urged the member agencies to consider the provision of their staff support in the midst of another big response.

The Secretariat shall define what kind of skills it requires and circulate the list among the Group.

- Members' Contingency Planning

- Many agencies have contingency plans, but may be not up-to-date, or very operational. Perhaps they could be made more consistent through the DER Group, specifically through the Sectoral Working Groups.

Briefing on DFID's Revised Disaster Response Operation Procedures (DROP):

- DFID is revising its contingency plan, which will become public. It shall be available on LCG website. GoB will also be part of the process. The pre-selection of the NGOs through which DFID would channel the emergency response assistance is at final stage. The list of NGOs will be superseded by a more comprehensive pre-qualification process to be done by the main UN Agencies. It should be noted that DFID would only respond to major disasters – only every few years – and not to local level disasters.

Any Other Business:

- Islamic Relief has taken the delivery of medical equipment and hygiene kits for relief assistance from USAID. Also received one container of blended food, for Rangpur for 3 months ration to lactating and pregnant women and children under 2 years. DER asked to circulate the list of equipment so that members can request IR to provide it where required.
- It was noted that many of the fatalities in the floods were drowning, accidents and snakebites, especially the children. It was suggested that agencies such as UNICEF should take the lead and communicate proper information and education messages, for DER member agencies to start disseminating them to their partners and to the public, to enhance preparedness. UNICEF is requested to share the relevant report with DER Group.
- OCHA mission is in Dhaka at request of UN-RC to help work on a UN inter-agency contingency plan. The mission will set up inter-agency working group and leave them with an agreed upon outline of the UN IA contingency plan.
- MSF-Holland has a new head of mission, Mr. Frido Herincky, who will be here for 2 years.
- Ashutosh Dey of Concern has been selected through an interview process of American Centre for 1 month visitor programme on disaster preparedness in Washington. He can be expected to come back and help train us.
- Masood Ahmed, UNICEF is now elected as Chair of UNICEF Global Staff Association for 2 years. He will work full time for the Association, either based in NY or in Dhaka.
- The Chair thanked Charlie Higgins, who is transferred to WFP Indonesia, for his contribution to floods 2004 response operation and the capacity building of DER Group.

Date and time of next meeting:

DER Group shall meet on Wed 06 July 05 unless necessity arises, in which case the Secretariat will convene the meeting of the Group earlier.

*DER Secretariat
7 June 2005*

ANNEX

A. Attendance List

ANNEX A
ATTENDANCE LIST

Serial	Name	Organisation
1	Mr. Matiur Rahman	BDRCS
2	Mr. Gunendu Roy	BRAC
3	Ms. Shantana Halder	CDMP
4	Mr. Sultan Ahmed	CEGIS
5	Mr. Rubaiyat Aumi	Christian Aid
6	Mr. Ashutosh Dey	Concern
7	Mr. Duncan King	DFID
8	Ms. Sheila Ryan	ICDDR B
9	Ms. Nazria Islam	IFRC
10	Ms. Jennifer Nino	IIRD
11	Mr. Joe Jacobson	IIRD
12	Dr. Aminul Karim Chowdry	Institute For Water Modelling (IWM)
13	Mr. Nurul Amin Bagmer	Islamic Relief
14	Mr. Dhiren Das	Medecins Sans Frontieres
15	Mr. Manny De Gueman	OCHA
16	Mr. Rajan Gengaje	OCHA
17	Mr. Md. Ruhul Amim	Save the Children USA
18	Ms. Rehana Khan	SIDA
19	Ms. Dilruba Haider	UNDP
20	Dr. Saiful Islam	UNICEF
21	Ms. Farhana Pinky	WFP
22	Mr. Douglas Casson Coutts	WFP [Chairperson]
23	Mr. Charlie Higgins	WFP [DER Secretariat]
24	Mr. Nick Russell	WFP [DER Secretariat]
25	Ms. Rehana Banoo	WFP [DER Secretariat]
26	Ms. Mariko Hattori	WFP [DER Secretariat]