

**LCG Sub-group on Disaster and Emergency Response (DER)
Minutes of the Special Meeting held on June 13, 2007**

Mr. Douglas Broderick, Country Director, WFP and Chair, UNDMT, chaired the meeting. The list of participants as introduced by them is attached as Annex A.

MAIN POINTS COVERED AT THE MEETING

1. Adoption of the minutes of the last meeting held on 29 May 2007:

The minutes were adopted without any modification.

2. Agency Response to Chittagong Mudslides:

CDMP: It was reported that teams of district administrative officers are actively working in these affected areas. Search and rescue continues to be the most priority activity. As of 13 June morning, government has distributed 16 MT of rice, G.R cash Tk.300,000, 750 kgs flatten rice, 146.5 kgs of molasses, 146 kgs of biscuits, 100 pcs sharees, and 100 pcs lungis to the affected people. On 12/06/2007, the Chief Advisor distributed Tk3000/-, 10kg rice, 2 kg flatten rice, 250gm molasses 1 sharee & 1 lungi each to some 100 (approx.) affected families. The Tsunami/Earthquake expert of CDMP was out in the affected areas to assess the risk of further landslides. In terms of health care facilities, the Director, Disease Control, DGHS has issued instruction letter to all divisional directors (health) and Civil Surgeons to enhance surveillance for disaster mitigation and disease outbreaks by sending g medical teams in the affected areas and report back to the control room, DGHS, that is operating on 24/7 basis.

USAID: The meeting was informed that a total of 43,000 USD and 70,000 USD have been allocated to CARE Bangladesh for Chittagong mudslides and Chokoria, Tangail for flash floods respectively.

IFRC: As reported it has sent one Red Crescent Youth (RCY) Search and Rescue/Assessment team to each of six affected areas in Chittagong. These teams had worked closely with Bangladesh Army, Fire Brigade and Bangladesh Police and so far recovered 24 dead bodies. In addition to this, one pick up and one ambulance have been deployed. A joint assessment team had been sent from BDRCS national headquarters the same day. According to their assessment, 260 families are worst affected. IFRC/BDRCS will respond to these affected people with family kits and 10 kgs of rice. Another 500 family kits are kept as standby at the Unit office. Distribution started from 13 June 2007. Contact has been established and coordination maintained with the Deputy Commissioner, Bangladesh Army, Police and other INGOS like Islamic Relief, Action Aid Bangladesh and other local NGOs. Health personnel from the local hospital and RCY are providing basic treatment to the affected people. In addition to these, IFRC and BDRCS are closely monitoring the flood situation in Chittagong, Cox's Bazaar and Bandarban districts.

UNICEF: They are maintaining close contact with DPHE on WATSAN issues. NGOs can directly contact DPHE for support if they require water purification tablets.

UNFPA: Keeping close contacts with the GoB medical centers and advised to keep all centers open to provide health care facilities to the affected people.

UNHCR: As informed there is no news of any disruption in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazaar due to this heavy rainfall.

WHO: The Country Office through its Emergency Humanitarian Action (EHA) program and EPI-SMOs under its IVD programme liaising with the Civil Surgeons (CS) of respective districts and Upazilla health officials for any immediate health needs and is providing technical support to the Line Director EPR, DGHS for management and support to the victims of mudslides. No disease outbreaks were reported. However, there is a possibility of an outbreak of waterborne diseases when the water will recede.

Action Aid, Bangladesh: On the day of the incident, AAB sent a team of 5 persons to Chittagong. They started their intervention by working closely with Fire Brigade and Civil Defense in Search and Rescue operation and also provided them with debris clearing equipments, raincoats, gloves etc to recover the dead bodies and to clear the debris. They deployed around 250 volunteers to work in the affected areas and provided food and medical support to 1800 families at the Cyclone shelter at Kumira. In addition to these, AAB provided water bottles and jerry cans to the affected families. They are likely to request International assistance from their headquarters at UK, in case further assistance is required.

BRAC: They have started their response operation from 12 June covering the whole affected areas of Chittagong and 3 upazillas each in Cox's Bazaar and Feni. Initially they have provided 10 kgs of rice and 2 kgs of pulses to 8,000 affected families in Chittagong, 7,000 in Cox's Bazaar and 3,000 in Feni. They have a plan to respond further after detailed assessment of the affected areas.

CARE Bangladesh: As reported CARE has completed assessments in 7 spots under the Chittagong City Corporation. With USAID funds, they have responded, through their partner NGOs, with food package to the needs of about 500 households from 12 June 2007. They will start another response covering 2500 households with 5 days ration from 13 June 2007. CARE will continue doing their assessment to identify further needs of the affected people. They are also providing plastic sheets, water jerry cans among the affected people. Besides, two portable water purification plants with the capacity of producing 20,000 liters of water per day will be installed shortly in a suitable place. In Chokoria under Cox's Bazaar district CARE, through their partner NGO has identified 4000 households in need of support. Any responding to these affected people will be undertaken upon approval of USAID funds. CARE has also identified several pockets of Sherpur, Sirajganj, Jamalpur and Bogra to intervene with 2180 survival packages. Affected people in these areas have also requested for agricultural seeds. This will also be done with USAID funds when received.

Concern Worldwide: Initially they identified 4,000 affected families in Chittagong through their partner NGO Nishkriti. They distributed one week's ration package comprising of 15 kg rice, 2 kg pulse, 1 liter vegetable oil, 1 kg salt and 5 packets of ORS to these affected families from their own fund. They are closely coordinating with government and other INGOs/local NGOs active in emergency operation in the area.

IR: They have done a very quick and short response at Lehubagan area in Chittagong by providing food and non-food items to 500 families. A group of volunteers are closely working with them. They will plan their next phase of response operation after a second round of in-depth assessment.

DER Secretariat: They briefed on the joint assessment report done by WFP and UNICEF on Chittagong mudslide. The summary of the report are:

- a. deaths: 124 persons (as of 12 June 2007)
- b. Adequate medical facilities available at District level
- c. GO/NGOs are active in responding with food, non-food, water jerry cans etc.
- d. The local government authority is active. UN agencies are ready to respond if need be.

The Chair informed of WFP's stockpile of emergency biscuits. If required, NGOs can contact WFP to provide them with high-energy biscuits to combine with their assistance package for distribution among the affected people.

Other issues raised:

DFID: With regard to Chittagong mudslides, DFID requested all to take a note on the gaps that will trigger others to respond accordingly.

IFRC: Emphasis was laid on much needed Psycho-social care of the affected people, particularly for those families who have lost more than 2/3 members in the family. It was suggested that suggested that the NGOs or other agencies working in the areas affected by the landslides/mudslides should take the issue into serious consideration. IFRC also pointed out that though the GoB has allocated 200 MT of rice and 13 lacs of cash grant but these have not yet reached the affected people. The DER Secretariat in reply said that the GoB as of date has distributed 16 tons of rice and is still engaged in the search and rescue operation. The GoB will soon scale up their distribution among the affected community.

OXFAM: Curious to know the methodology of the response operation by different agencies. They expressed their concern that according to WFP/UNICEF assessment report on Chittagong mudslides a number of 1500 are floating and as GoB and other NGOs are working actively and responding to the needs of the affected, is there any need for further assistance to these people?

UNDP: Remarked that DER members should look into other areas as well in addition to Chittagong mudslides. UNDP wished to know if NGOs working in affected areas identified any need for early recovery or if they have plans for any early recovery assessment in the affected areas or planning for any long-term involvement in terms of response and rehabilitation. Suggested a subset of DER could be set up in Chittagong to ensure more coordination as both WFP and UNICEF office is there.

The Chair summarized the discussion:

- a. Psycho-social support can be provided to the affected population.
- b. DER should focus more on response coordination to avoid duplication of efforts.
- c. Longer term needs like housing, livelihoods etc should be identified for early recovery.
- d. Medicine stocks are adequate to support the affected people.

Actions:

- a. The members agreed to remain vigilant and report any changing situation to the Secretariat.
- b. The members have been requested to send their response update or situation reports to DER secretariat for wider dissemination.

3. Presentation made by Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD):

Dr. Sujit Kumar Deb Sharma made a brief presentation on the rainfall situation in Dhaka and Chittagong respectively during 1-12 June 2007. A total of 103 mm rainfall occurred in only 3 hours (6 am to 9 am of 11 June 2007) in Dhaka that caused water logging. 24-hour total rainfall on 11 June 2007 was 152 mm. The last highest rainfall in 24 hours in monsoon was 341 mm recorded on 13 September 2004. In Chittagong 315 mm rainfall occurred in only 6 hours (6 am to 12 noon of 11 June 2007) whereas 24-hour rainfall recorded was 425 mm that was the highest record in Ambagan, Chittagong since 2000. This rainfall in Chittagong caused landslides as the hills were of bare soil without vegetation. Heavy rainfall activity was recorded all over Bangladesh during 9-11 June 2007 due to active monsoon over the country. There were heavy rainfall warnings as well as maritime signal (Local/Cautious Signal number 3 for all the three ports) and riverine warning signal number 2 for river ports. The Chair appreciated and thanked him for his presentation.

Issues discussed:

- BMD's forecast
 - i) for the next 15 days: monsoon is going to be active again for the next 3-5 days and then rainfall will decrease.
 - ii) for the next 3 months (June-August): there will be 10-20% higher rainfall than average.
- BMD informed that only 7-9% of local rains and 90% of upstream water causes flood in Bangladesh.
- According to BMD the heavy monsoon rainfall is not only responsible for the water logging. Other manmade hazards like the lack of the maintenance of proper drainage system, cutting down of trees etc contribute heavily to the waterlogging situation in the low-lying areas of the country.
- BMD recommends i. to ensure proper drainage system so that water can drain out to the river and finally to the Bay in case of heavy rainfall; ii. proper family planning system that will ensure less population; iii. make the afforestation programme a success and thus make Bangladesh greener.
- Responding to UNDP and IFRC question whether the amount of rainfall was higher than normal in 2004, BMD said this information could be given later as he did not have the data with him.
- AAB asked if BMD could do a quantitative prediction of heavy rainfall. In reply, BMD said that it is still not possible but they are working towards a plan to do this in future.
- DFID asked if there is a forecast of 10-20% more rainfall than average in the next three months, is Bangladesh in the risk of any flooding and if so which areas are to be affected? Dr Sharma replied that it is very difficult to predict the possibility of floods. But according to his analysis and prediction there could be a big flood in 2009 and some indication of this could be seen in 2008 as well. BMD also informed that FFWC is in a better position to forecast whether or not there will be any flood this year.
- Concern Universal asked if there is any forecast from neighbouring countries regarding floods this year. BMD replied that they get some information from Indian Met department (IMD) as well as from the Joint River Commission (JRC). BMD also informed that there is a network of information sharing among all the Met offices in the world.

3. Any Other Business:

OXFAM: Emphasized on the issue of coordination approach to be used for the relief and response operation at Chittagong. The Chair said that all need to consult with the DER emergency relief response matrix carefully to avoid any duplication of efforts.

UNICEF: With regards to coordination issue, UNICEF strongly feels that DER is the best forum for coordination. Proper mechanisms need to be identified to ensure better coordination.

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

ANNEX A: ATTENDANCE LIST of DER Meeting held on 13 June 2007

Organisations	Sl	Name	Organization
GoB	1	Mr. Sujit Kumar Deb Sharma	BMD
	2	Mr. Shamal Zahid	CDMP
	3	Mr. Tadiq Ahmed	CDMP
Donors	4	Mr. Johny Sarker	DFID
	5	Ms. Tasnim Siddiq	DFID
	6	Mr. Yoshihiro Sakakibara	Embassy of Japan
	7	Mr. Elchiro Cho	JICA
	8	Mr. Sayedul Arefin	JICA
	9	Mr. Alan Biggs	IFRC
	10	Mr. Sifayet Ullah	IFRC
	11	Ms. Shahnaz Zakaria	USAID
UN	12	Mr. Ad Spikers	FAO
	13	Dr. Subash Das Gupta	FAO
	14	Mr. Rune Brandrup	UNRC
	15	Mr. Md. Tarik-ul-Islam	UNDP
	16	Mr. Zulfikur Ali Khan	UNICEF
	17	Mr. Francis Teoh	UNHCR
	18	Dr. Rafiqus Sultan	UNFPA
	19	Dr. Kazi Akram	WHO
	20	Dr. Zahidur Rahim	WHO
	21	Mr. Douglas Broderick	WFP
	22	Mr. Abraham De Kock	WFP

	23	Mr. El-Fatih Bakhiet	WFP
	24	Ms. Diane Prioux de Baudimont	WFP
	25	Ms. Rehana Banoo	WFP, DRR
	26	Mr. Monzu Morshed	WFP, DRR

NGOs	27	Ms. Wahida Bashir Ahmed	Action Aid Bangladesh
	28	Mr. Sajid Raihan	Action Aid Bangladesh
	29	Mr. M. Rafiqul Islam	BDRCS
	30	Mr. Tapan Kumar Brahman	BRAC
	31	Mr. Rob Chowdhury	BRAC
	32	Mr. Zubaidur Rahman	CARE Bangladesh
	33	Mr. Stephane Bonduelle	Concern Universal
	34	Mr. M. A Wahed	Concern Worldwide Bangladesh
	35	Mr. Elish Arun Majumder	HEED Bangladesh
	36	Mr. Md. Abdur Rahman	Handicap International Bangladesh
	37	Mr. Nazmul Haque	IOM
	38	Mr. Maksudur Rahman	Islamic Relief
	39	Mr. Farid Hasan	Oxfam GB
	40	Ms. Kabita Bose	Oxfam GB
	41	Mr. Md. Iqbal Miah	SCF-US
42	Ms. Sara Piazzano	TDH-Italy	
43	Mr. Ryan Belasso	World Vision Bangladesh	
DER	44	Mr. Malik Kabir	DER Secretariat (WFP)
Secretariat	45	Ms. Meher Nigar Bhuiyan	DER Secretariat (WFP)

Minutes recorded and circulated by: DER Secretariat