

LCG Sub-Group on Disaster and Emergency Response (DER)

MEETING MINUTES

Chair Mr. Ahsan Zakir, Director General (DG), Disaster Management Bureau (DMB)
Date 6 May 2010
Time 16:00 hours
Venue CDMP Conference Room, Disaster management & Relief Bhaban, Dhaka
Agenda Annex-I
Participant List Annex-II

Followings are the key discussions held in the meeting in line with the agenda circulated earlier:

1. Welcome and Introduction

Mr. Ahsan Zakir, DG, DMB welcomed participants to the DER meeting. In the welcome speech, Mr. Zakir expressed his keen interest to know about the overall functions and responsibilities of DER group and sought all cooperation from the participants to make the DER group more functional and effective towards disaster response management in Bangladesh. He acknowledged with thanks the contribution of WFP as a secretariat of the DER group for the last 10 years.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Robert Juhkam, UNDP Deputy Country Director (Programme) highly commended the outstanding role played by WFP as the secretariat and co-chair for the DER group since its inception. Mr. Juhkam reaffirmed UNDP's commitment to extend all possible support to DMB as co-chair for an interim period until DMB is ready to take over full responsibilities.

The meeting was informed that:

- As per the JCS recommendations, DER Group will now be led by GoB and the DG DMB will chair the meeting in case the Secretary, Disaster Management & Relief Division, MoFDM is unable to do so.
- There is a provision in CDMP phase-II to provide necessary resources to DMB to facilitate DER work/coordination.
- DER group would meet once every three months. If situation demands, special meetings may be called as and when necessary.
- The next meeting will be held soon aimed at assessing the monsoon situation and overall preparedness by the government and other humanitarian actors. It will also review and finalize the revised Terms of Reference (ToR) of the DER group.

2. Monsoon / Flood Preparedness 2010

- Participant from FFWC gave a flood prediction for May 2010 saying that heavy rainfall is likely to continue over the northeast and south-eastern part of the country accompanied by hill water from upstream increasing the water level of local rivers. This may lead to river erosion and flash flood in low-lying areas namely in Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Habigonj, Sylhet, Kishorgong, Sirajgonj, Bagora, Kurigram and Netrokona.
- FFWC representative also informed that they are continuously monitoring the rain fall situation and the level of water in the Indian rivers through IMD (Indian Meteorological Department) and issuing flood prediction on regular basis.
- BMD representative gave an update on the state of weather. As informed; weather is likely to remain mainly dry over the country with chances of rain accompanied by temporary gusty/squally wind. Moderate to severe heat wave is likely to sweep over Khulna and the Rajshahi Division. Besides, mild to moderate heat wave is sweeping over Dhaka and Chittagong Division and it may continue for sometime.
- A representative from CDMP informed the meeting that continuous rain accompanied by hill water from upstream increased the water level of local rivers which caused flash flood in Sunamganj district. More than 80,000 farmers in this district have been directly affected by the flash flood. Around 1, 08,032 hectares of Boro crops have been damaged; around

2685 houses have been fully and partially damaged; around 50 shops have been damaged and one person is reportedly killed.

- With the deterioration of flood situation in the Haor areas of these districts due to onrush of hill water, farmers are harvesting their unripe paddy paying higher labour cost.
- According to the Office of DRRO, the government has allocated a total of 26,000 metric tons rice for the affected families, as well as cash grant of BDT 26,000 for repairing of houses in Sunamganj district. Besides, BDT 10,000 taka has been provided to the deceased family. The government has also recently announced that they would provide certain incentives to the affected farmers so that they could cultivate Aush crops to minimize the loss in the ensuing monsoon.
- A number of NGOs highlighted the critical situation in the Haor areas where around 60% of the standing Boro crops have been lost due to flash floods.
- Participating representatives from UN agencies, INGOs and NGOs presented their pre-positioning plans to face the ensuing monsoon.
- Oxfam GB informed that they will undertake a rapid need assessment in flash flood areas of Kishoreganj and Sunamganj districts.

The meeting decided that:

- All information with regard to flood preparedness programme by DER members will be captured into a data base maintained by the DER Secretariat.
- DG DMB will inform the senior management in the Disaster Management Relief Division of MoFDM the concerns raised by NGOs for responding to the sudden flash flood at the earliest.
- Oxfam GB will share the findings of the rapid assessment among the DER members once it is completed.
- The DER Secretariat will circulate the pre-monsoon preparedness template to all members for collecting relevant data.

3. Aila Situation Update

- Ms Nishat Chowdhury from IOM presented a joint position paper on priorities for the Aila affected communities prepared by number of INGOs, NGOs, IOM and UNDP. As informed, there has been a loss of 40% in income on average of the Aila-affected families. Since November 2009, an average of one in four families has left their settlement for other safer rural and urban areas in search of employment. Some families have started to move away from the current locations for various reasons, including better access to resources and personal security. As of today, less than 10% of the households currently struggling for their daily survival in the Aila affected area, have been supported by government or non-governmental intervention. It is found that in severely affected Khulna and Satkhira District over 50% of displaced people (more than 200,000) are still living in the same condition 11 months after Cyclone Aila. Despite Government, NGO and self recovery initiatives towards shelter reconstruction and repair, recent media reports (both electronic and print) suggest that, a substantial gap (more than 90%) remains to be addressed. Taking into account the vulnerability of the affected families as well as ensuing monsoon, the joint paper recommended that the national and international humanitarian actors should come forward with more resources for undertaking livelihood, shelter, and WASH programme at different phases.
- Representative from EU described the ground realities in the Aila affected areas and requested DER group for impressing upon the government the need for giving serious attention towards repair of embankments without any further loss of time otherwise all efforts geared towards recovery will be meaningless.
- The meeting was informed that, UN joint mission will undertake rapid assessment in Aila affected Satkhira and Khulna district from 9 May to 12 May 2010.

Decision:

Based on the findings of the UN joint mission, a presentation will be made in the next DER Group meeting.

4. DER Shelter Working Group

- Mr. BMM Mozharul Huq gave a presentation on current shelter situation in cyclone Aila affected areas. Mr. Huq impressed upon the members the need for revisiting the existing the shelter designs and specifications so that these could be appropriately modified and amended to suit the requirements of shelter constructions in the Aila affected areas. Representatives from Caritas, Oxfam GB, IR, IFRC and Muslim Aid evinced their interest to be members of the Technical Working Group (TWiG) under the SWG to undertake the proposed assignment.

Decision:

The meeting decided that a meeting of the DER Shelter Working Group be held soon to finalize the shelter designs and specifications for the Aila affected area.

5. LCG-DER Web Site

- Recognizing the need for updating the LCG-DER membership list, the meeting was informed that a new email list has been opened as www.dmic.org.bd so as to enable the prospective members to register their membership by providing the required information.

Decision:

The meeting decided that the minutes of the present meeting will be circulated amongst the members through the existing email list and all subsequent communications should be made to LCG-DER group through the new email list.

Meeting was concluded with thanks to and from the chair.

Minutes prepared by

Md. Tarikul Islam
Communication and Documentation Officer
DRF, UNDP

Minutes endorsed by

Ahsan Zakir
Chair DER Group &
Director General, Disaster Management Bureau

Annex-I: Agenda

Disaster & Emergency Response (DER)

Sub-Group of the Local Consultative Group in Bangladesh

Thursday, 6 May 2010 at 4 pm

CDMP Conference Room, Disaster Management & Relief Bhaban, Dhaka

Agenda

1. Welcoming of the new Director General, Disaster Management Bureau, Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Mr. Ahsan Zakir, Additional Secretary
2. Introductions
3. Monsoon / Flood Preparedness 2010
 - a. Review of potential high-risk flood prone areas
 - b. Water level in major rivers and Haor damage situation
 - c. Directorate of Relief & Rehabilitation's plans
 - d. NGO pre-positioning and preparedness planning
 - e. Open discussion
4. Aila Situation Update
 - a. Presentation by IOM
 - b. Presentation by international agencies involved in Aila response programme funded by ECHO
 - c. Update on GoB / agencies activities
 - d. Open discussion
5. DER Shelter Working Group
 - a. Update from Mr. BMM Mozharul Huq, DER SWG Coordinator
6. AOB

Annex II: List of participants

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1.	Ratan Kumar Poddar	Caritas	pcdm@caritasbd.org
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