



LCG Sub-Group - Disasters and Emergency Response

« Ready to Respond in Times of Need »



News Release

Collaborative approach stressed to handle Emergencies

Dhaka, Wednesday 15 December 2004: Speakers at a ‘Lessons Learned workshop on Flood 2004’ held by DER Sub-Group of Local Consultative Group in Dhaka today, called for a stronger coordination and collaboration amongst DER Sub-Group members (GOB, Donors, UN agencies and NGOs) and media to enhance the effectiveness of relief and recovery operations.

In the closing session of the workshop Mr. Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Food and Disaster Management Minister, appreciated the efforts made by the DER group to help Government and the flood affected people and said “*the DER contributed immensely to coordination of relief and to our work.*” He thanked DER Sub-Group for their assistance and relief distribution operations during recent floods, which effectively complemented the Government’s overall efforts.

Sixty senior managers from member-agencies of the DER Sub-Group including the relevant Government of Bangladesh departments, major national and international NGOs, Donors and the main UN Agencies, participated in the four-day workshop that started on 12 December at the BCDM (Bangladesh Centre for Development Management), Savar, Dhaka. Mr. Douglas Casson Coutts, WFP Representative and Chairperson of the DER Sub-Group was also present in the workshop.

Sharing the lessons learnt from the recent flood relief operations the DER Sub- Group Chairperson and WFP Representative, Mr. Coutts appreciated the important role played by the media especially by the local media during the recent flood and said “*Information sharing and a collaborative approach amongst various agencies of GOB, Donors, UN, NGOs and Media is crucial to help disaster affected poor people to meet their immediate and long term needs.*” While recognising the role of individual member agencies of the DER Sub-Group in the recent emergency operations, Mr. Coutts said “*Besides responding in whatever measures we can, the DER also has an advocacy role to help millions affected by disasters to receive appropriate and timely relief.*”

Representatives from different media organisation also shared their perspective with the DER Sub-Group members. They emphasised the need for a common forum that can facilitate regular interaction between media and DER Sub-Group members on various issues related to emergencies and disasters. Media representative from Associate Press (AP), Bangladesh Sangbad Shangstha (BSS), ATN Bangla Television, The Daily Star, and The Financial Express took part in the discussion on shared lessons learned from the reporting of the recent flood.

The workshop was organised by the DER Secretariat and members and sponsored by WFP. The work was headed by the WFP Disaster Preparedness Advisor, Mr. Charlie Higgins.

Notes to the Editors:

The DER Group represents a collaborative effort on the part of the Government, NGOs, Donors and UN agencies. It was established in January 2001 and meets regularly under the chairmanship of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). Its main purpose is to perform timely assessments of need during times of natural disaster and to ensure a collaborative and coordinated response by all its member organisations.

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