



# Minutes | Meeting of HLP Working Group – Meeting #3

Shelter, Land, and Site Coordination Sector  
10<sup>th</sup> April 2026 | 3:00 – 4:30pm | Online via MS Teams

## Co-Chairs:

- Sandra D'Urzo, IFRC (Sector Co-coordinator)
- Aziza Usoof, UN-Habitat (HLP Technical Advisor / Co-convener)

## 1. Executive Summary & Strategic Roadmap

**Overview:** The HLP Working Group has transitioned from foundational assessment to the operationalisation of functional tools designed to resolve land and property bottlenecks within an eight-week window.

Meeting	Date	Key Outcomes
Meeting #1	13th March 2026	Introductions and identification of HLP goals
Meeting #2	27th March 2026	Identified two workstreams to move from Problems to Solutions
Meeting #3	10th April 2026	Delivery of Caseload Matrix (WS1) and Documentation Guidance Note (WS2)

**Draft Problem Statement:** "Despite the imminent closing of the Humanitarian Priority Plan (HPP), the current humanitarian shelter and recovery needs are still very significant and widespread. Current recovery efforts for post-Cyclone Ditwah housing follow a top-down, bureaucratic model that fails to account for the diverse legal and practical realities of affected populations. This misalignment results in acute financial and housing insecurity for vulnerable communities in urban informal settlements, rural reservations, and tea plantations."

## Operational Framework – Problems to Solutions:

- Workstream 1 (Policy & Framing): Codifying HLP issues across Urban, Rural, and Plantation contexts via the Caseload Matrix.
- Workstream 2 (Practical Implementation): Developing Referral and Documentation Maps to empower field teams and displaced families to navigate authorisations.

## 2. Welcome and Quick Updates

Sandra D'Urzo (IFRC) opened the session, reviewed the agenda, and aligned participants on the eight-week delivery timeline. An administrative update confirmed that UN-Habitat will assume leadership of the HLP Working Group in May to ensure continuity as the group moves into an operational phase.

## 3. Workstream 1: Advances and HLP Contextual Analysis

Lead: Aziza Usoof, Rasika Mendis, Gowthaman



The Caseload Matrix was presented as a structured framework to map HLP issues, responsible authorities, and decision-making gaps across geographic sectors. The Urban Matrix is complete and will serve as the template for Rural and Plantation contexts.

Key gaps identified include entitlement criteria based solely on land ownership (excluding informal occupants), undocumented and unregulated tenure arrangements, and the absence of an effective grievance mechanism with decision-making authority.

**Decision:** The group agreed to complete the Rural and Plantation matrices using the Urban matrix as the benchmark.

#### **4. Workstream 2: Advances on Referral Pathways**

Lead: CRS / IOM

The Documentation Guidance Note was introduced as a field-level tool to support beneficiaries facing barriers due to missing or incomplete documentation.

The note includes guiding principles, a core document replacement matrix for essential records such as the National Identity Card (NIC), and clear referral pathways beginning with the Grama Niladhari and escalating to the Divisional Secretary when required.

**Decision:** The document will be circulated for final track-changes review to reflect updated government regulations.

#### **5. Update: Tea Estate Compensation and HLP Impact**

Lead: Gowthaman / CSO Representatives

A new cabinet-approved decree addressing plantation housing was reviewed. While the framework rectifies previous exclusions, it introduces a new discriminatory distinction between plantation workers and non-workers.

Workers are entitled to a 10-perch land plot and a LKR 5 million housing grant, while non-workers receive the housing grant without land, requiring independent land identification.

**CSO partners raised concerns that the worker designation, determined by plantation management, entrenches discrimination and contravenes the principle of equal land rights.**

#### **6. Donor Engagement & Transitional Shelter Advocacy**

The Indian High Commission reiterated its offer of material support for transitional shelters, though land identification and NBRO clearance remain key bottlenecks.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank expressed interest in housing projects in Kandy and Polonnaruwa, with follow-up planned after their site visit.

Following sustained CSO advocacy, the Presidential Task Force will convene on 16th April to address the critical lack of transitional shelter options for families in precarious conditions.

#### **7. Action Items**



#	Action Item	Responsible	Deadline
1	Coordinate WS1 matrix completion (Rural and Plantation)	Aziza / Gowthaman / Nishanta	Next Meeting
2	Circulate WS2 Guidance Note for feedback (including polygamous caseloads and latest decree)	Sandra	Immediate
3	Submit formal request confirming UN-Habitat leadership from May	Sandra / Harshini	Month-end
4	Share updates from Presidential Task Force meeting	Gowthaman	Next Meeting
5	Distribute meeting minutes, donor decks, and draft WS1/WS2 products	Sandra	1 Week

## 8. Closing

Sandra closed the meeting by underscoring the urgency of **finalizing these tools ahead of the 16th April government discussions**. The next session will focus on **validation of the completed matrices and operational handover planning to UN-Habitat**.