



JOINT PERMANENT HOUSING, SHELTER/ NFI SECTOR MEETING

Thursday, 1 March 2012 at 11.00 hrs, UNHCR Conference Room

ATTENDEES:

Name	Agency	Name	Agency
Laurent Raguin	UNHCR	David Evans	UN HABITAT
Oscar Domato	ADRA	Nimmi Ariyaratne	SDC
P. Bandaratillake	ADRA	N. Amalray	IOM
Jaime Roys	EU Delegation	Dulani Sirisena	AusAid
Fahim Wahab	Muslim Aid	Rasika Mendis	LST
Faizer Khan	Muslim Aid	Tashya De Silva	World Vision
Dr. S. Keethaponkalam	Caritas	Dawn Marie Vout	UMCOR
Donald Sinclair	UNOPS	Aslam Saja	ECHO
Sarath Wasala	UNCEF	Gimhani Kariyawasam	ASB
Ruwani Hettiarachchi	UNHCR	Elilini Hoole	ZOA

Issues discussed:

1. Briefing on the Inter-Sector meeting.
2. Cluster Response Plan and JPA 2012.
3. Permanent Housing update.

1. Briefing on Inter-Sector meeting

Inter-sector meeting was to be held on 1 March afternoon to discuss the restructuring of UN coordination mechanisms in Sri Lanka. During and after the emergency there were sectoral coordination instruments run by UNOCHA and the shelter/NFI sector also had coordination meetings during this period. One year and a half ago it was decided to jointly run the Shelter/NFI coordination meetings with Permanent Housing sector. Permanent Housing sector was earlier under Early Recovery sector which operated with three sub- sectors i.e. permanent housing, livelihood and infrastructure development.

Subsequent to this split, Livelihood sector merged with WFP and FAO. They have also de-facto working together in the changed structure. Education sector has only two players, i.e. UNICEF and Save the Children, therefore no coordination meetings are being held under this sector except for bi-lateral meetings and meetings with Government. These changes explain how coordination systems have evolved with time and with the changing ground situation in the North.

Discussions are underway with UNOCHA and RC/HC's Office on how we can make this coordination system evolved. As for UNHCR, permanent housing and shelter sectors should remain merged and might be merged to a global sector eventually. As far as the Shelter and NFI are concerned, no big unresolved issues that requires extensive coordination are left in this sector.

However, UNHCR will still remain active and permanent housing will lead the sector, as the latter is much more of a development mechanism than a humanitarian one.

It was noted that in the matrices shared by UNHCR indicated that the shelter needs are still high. This is why in the spirit of JPA, transitional shelter is still very important. There is consensus that since the permanent housing will take time to materialise, until such time the transitional shelter is a solution and a critical need.

It is equally important to understand how linked this change is to the wider development framework of the Government. However, this restructuring is more about changing the coordination mechanism, a UN lead issue that considers a transition from coordination of humanitarian to long term development and its link with other sectors such as watsan, education, health etc.

There is a global realisation that the situation in the North has moved away from humanitarian crisis. This does not mean there are no Needs, but a drastic change in the global situation. On the other hand, the position of the government should be taken into account. The Government has been saying for a long time that now they have a development plan, therefore we should provide our support to them, while continuing to raise humanitarian issues.

Linking rehabilitation and relief to reconstruction and development could be a means to match the gaps existing in the short term and to look towards development. There have been discussions with UNDP on this early recovery concept as a mechanism to bridge the gap between humanitarian needs and development. UNOPS, IOM, ASB, UMCOR etc will continue to work in the shelter sector.

Humanitarian coordination mechanism came into existence in Sri Lanka after 2004 Tsunami in different format. The war was in existence for a decade before that, but there was never a humanitarian coordination structure. It is crucial that we identify when the humanitarian situation ends, as this will help institutionalising the participation of the Government in this structure. Some groups get the participation of the Government. For instance, Government Chairs the Mine Action meeting. The Government however needs to be informed and involved in what we do, which in turn could avoid controversies and adversaries.

2. Cluster Response Plan and (Joint Plan of Assistance) JPA 2012

JPA was signed 21 February 2012, and copies were shared. UNHCR has been informed that UNOCHA will organise a meeting with the PTF on the JPA and on the project proposals. It was meant to be launched at the same time as the global CHAP. However, the JPA does not raise much money internationally.

Last year the JPA was instrumental in obtaining the endorsement of the PTF on the projects. There will be presentations - first to PTF on 5th or 6th then to the HCT and then to the Donors on 13th March 2012*.

3. Permanent Housing Issues

Estimated overall damage level in the North is over the last 20 plus years is round about 164,000. How many of these repaired privately is not known exactly. Estimated by UN-Habitat that around 20% of families will self-recover without specific housing assistance and up to 20% of families will not return. Some of this later 20% is in the High Security Zone in Jaffna. It is therefore estimated that a working figure of approximately 100,000 houses could be considered as the overall NEED. Since 2009, there are commitments for about 35,000 houses by Donors; biggest being AUSAID, EU, Red Cross, and IFRC. In 2012 the number of houses in pipeline, not counted as part of the 35,000 mentioned above, is about 8,000 houses. Including the Indian government's recent announcement of 43,000 houses for the north, this brings the overall commitment of 83,000 (40,000 + 8,000 + 35,000 = 83,000). At the end, there will be a theoretical gap of about 17,000 houses. The demographical changes will be a difficult aspect to consider, as the principle behind the projects is to provide a house to house. This is not a compensation scheme.

Eligibility and vulnerability

Technically the beneficiaries who received transitional shelters will not be exempted from the permanent houses project. It is clear that the colleagues involved in permanent housing projects are working to include these groups, while UNHCR and UNHABITAT will continue to advocate on this. However, it becomes complicated to distinguish the semi-permanent houses from CHORE houses. The beneficiary lists put together by the Government Agents will have clear categorisation based on who received nothing and who received semi-permanent. If there is excess capacity in the project then the second group will benefit.

However, a proper census will give the answers to many speculations and will show what type of gaps exists. A. *Enumeration of vital events in 2011* outlines some figures that are controversial. Over the past few years, we have been using different figures which were given by Government Agents, which are very different from the numbers in the aforementioned report.

4. Indian Housing Project

There was a short listing of 14 agencies, i.e. HABITAT for Humanity, UNHABITAT, UNOPS, Red Cross, PA, CHA, Caritas, OfERR, UMCOR, ASB, & IOM, Sewalanka, and Sarvodaya etc. These 14 short listed agencies have been requested to put project proposals together by 19 March 2012 out of which about 3 or 4 will be selected. Shortage of material, shortage of labour, hike on fuel prices etc continue become issues.

The Indian Housing project plans 11,000 houses to be completed in the first year. Home-owner driven huge social benefits but slow and complex process, and therefore poses questions on the feasibility of this plan.

* The subsequent Inter-Sector meeting decided that there will be no presentation to the PTF.

