



JOINT PERMANENT HOUSING, SHELTER/ NFI SECTOR MEETING

Thursday, 2 February 2012 at 15.00 hrs, UNHCR Conference Room

ATTENDEES:

Name	Agency	Name	Agency
Laurent Raguin	UNHCR	David Evans	UN HABITAT
P.T.J. Kannan	ECHO	Donald Sinclair	UNOPS
Janani Thambaiyah	NRC	Nimmi Ariyaratne	SDC
Dr. S. Keethaponkalan	Caritas Sri Lanka	Simone Schoenenberger	SDC
A. Quintus	Caritas Sri Lanka	Yniimi	UNICEF
Dulani Sirisena	AusAid	Dawn Marie Vont	UMCOR
Nicola Perera	OCHA	Sarath Wasab	UNICEF
Mohamed Azad	DRC	Jackson Selliah	UNHCR
Ruwani Hettiarachchi	UNHCR		

Issues discussed:

1. Debriefing on Inter-Sector meeting held on 23 January 2012.
2. Permanent Housing issues, including update on the Indian Government Housing project.
3. Debriefing on UNHCR's visit to Kompavil.
4. Latest statistics on Menik Farm and Returnees.
5. Shelter situation in returnee areas.

1. Debriefing on Inter-Sector meeting held on 23 January 2012.

OCHA organized an inter-sector meeting on 23 January 2012 to discuss about a new framework for coordination of work within the humanitarian community in Sri Lanka. The existing Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) includes UN agencies and some other NGOs as well as Donors. This team consists of about twenty to twenty five members. Underneath the main HCT is the inter-sector meeting comprise sector leads such as UNHABITAT, UNHCR, and UNICEF. A similar set up exists in all the districts as well. The idea of the meeting held on 23 January was to rethink through this framework. OCHA recommended to have the main HCT, plus a sub HCT and still the inter sector meeting to be in existent. The sub HCT was suggested to be the decision making body.

Overall, it was felt that the word humanitarian is no longer appropriate to the Sri Lankan context; and that the UN system as a whole should be geared more towards development and early recovery. It was also suggested at the meeting that the UN will work in a more integrated manner with the government. Notably, the group has already evolved to an early recovery mode where for instance Shelter and NFI sector will phase down, while permanent housing sector will be prominent; similarly livelihood and agriculture sectors will become predominant. While OCHA has its own role in the process, UNDP would take a lead role in this context.

Next step as explained by OCHA will be to retain the plenary HCT broader membership and to separate it from the smaller HCT, which will focus on accountability and transparency. Members of the smaller HCT are representatives of different constituencies of UN, donors and NGOs. Consultation with stakeholders to finalize the process will continue.

It was pointed out by UNHABITAT that the gradual disappearance of the humanitarian concept will have major funding implications and the mechanisms that come hand in hand with the transition from humanitarian situation will have to be carefully formulated. However, UNHCR noted that humanitarian activities will not disappear completely. This only indicates that in future the focus will not be on humanitarian assistance.

Further, 2010 instructions from Secretary General highlight that UNHCR and UNDP should sit together towards a transition from humanitarian to early recovery situation that will be eventually bridged with development.

2. Permanent Housing Issues (*matrix attached*)

2.1 Permanent Housing Statistics in the North

Based on the data provided by Divisional Secretariats over recent years the total number of damaged or destroyed houses in the North is estimated at approximately 164,000. However these numbers do not capture private and individual rebuilding that took place in the north over the past decade. Additionally it is estimated by UN-Habitat that around 20% of families will recover without specific housing assistance and up to 20% of families will not return. It is therefore estimated that the actual conflict related *Need* for housing assistance is approximately 100,000 houses. Currently approx. 35,000 houses have been committed by various agencies, including Government projects, AUSAID, EU, and the Red Cross and other smaller contributors. In 2012 the number of houses in pipeline, not counted as part of the 34,000 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 to $40000 + 8,000 + 35,000 = 83,000$. Accordingly, there is a *potential* gap of approximately 17,000 houses. It is noted that about 30 agencies are involved in housing reconstruction, most of whom can only deliver small numbers of houses due to funding restrictions and other capacity issues. UN-Habitat, SDC, Red Cross and ASB are the only agencies committed to complete over 1,000 houses.

The rainy season this year did not affect the housing construction as much as anticipated. However skilled labour has been a constant challenge due to its scarcity and high costs. Unskilled labour also has become an issue as the labourers go back to their agricultural and fishing activities during the season.

2.2. Indian Government Housing Project

It was confirmed that an advertisement for *Expression of Interest* for the Indian Housing Project appeared in the newspapers. Deadline for the submission of EOI is 8 February 2012. The project is for construction of 43,000 houses and the breakdown as follows;

- 40,000 home-owner driver houses for the North: 35,000 full houses and 5,000 repairs
- 3,000 home-owner driver houses for the East:

- Additionally 6,000 houses will be let as separate contracts using a contractor driven methodology (more info to follow as the details remain unconfirmed).

The project is designed to be a 3 years and the cost of a house would be approx LKR 500,000 – 600,000. Given the size and the period of the project, it is anticipated that the costs of labour and materials will be affected by inflation.

2.3) Other Housing

Substantial training programmes will be necessary to support the construction skills requirement.

It was explained that the NEHRP housing project also has come to an end having completed 49,490 houses over the past eight years. But the NEHRP houses in Kilinochchi, (5,300) and Mullaitivu (3,000) built pre-2007 would have been damaged and destroyed during the 2007 -2009 conflict.

3) Debriefing on UNHCR visit to Kompavil

There were about 72 families resettled in Kompavil who were provided with very good quality transitional shelters with quite solid foundation and a lockable room. Other basic amenities such as dug wells were also available, and the people were provided with food. Each family has received a block of land of about $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ acre and cleared boundaries are being put up at the moment. Fishermen were given access to sea and were provided with one boat for four families. But they refused it, as they expected one boat for two families. Farmers were offered land, but they refused the land too as they claim it was too far away.

Another 128 families (415 individuals) from Menik Farm will move to Kompavil on 3 February 2012 and each family will be given a transitional shelter. UNHCR will continue to monitor voluntariness of the return. Those that were interviewed during the visit gave a general impression that many people were happy to be in Kompavil. Some people mentioned that they did not want to go back to their places of origin due to their traumatic experiences.

There are 6 Grama Niladhari (GN) divisions released for mine clearance in Puthukkudiyiruppu for the technical survey to be carried out i.e. Ananthapuram, Sivanagar, Mandavil, Mallihaithivu Puthukkudiyiruppu West and Puthukkudiyiruppu East. It was pointed out that only patches in some of the above 6 GNs have been open for clearance. Of the Maritimepaththu DS, half of Mullivaikkal East and entire Mllivaikkal West and Ampelavanpokkanai are not released. No time frame given for the completion of the technical survey, which will be followed by mine clearance.

4) Latest statistics on Menik Farm and Returnees. (Tables and map attached)

As of 23 January 2012 total number of families left in Menik Farm are 2007; this includes 925 families in Zone 0 and 1082 families in Zone 1.

In Zone 0, UNOPS is doing the maintenance, repairing and decommissioning at minor level, while in Zone 1 UNHCR is carrying out maintenance work. Further, according to Ministry of Resettlement, it is foreseen that Menik Farm will remain open until June 2012.

5). Shelter situation in return areas (*matrix attached*)

Most of the families remaining in Menik Farm have been committed for Indian housing; therefore they do not want transitional shelters. The belief is that they will disqualify from getting a permanent house if they move into a transitional shelter which should not be the case.