

Minutes of IASC Task Force Meeting, South Asia EQ
Monday, 27th December 2005

1) Regular update from agencies on progress and concerns regarding the implementation of the “90 Day Winter Plan”

- **UNDP:** The main activities in the field are currently focussed on building capacity and boosting the strength of the Earthquake Relief & Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA). There have been intense discussions between the cluster members and the ERRA on this and some donors have also mentioned the possibility of seconding experts to the ERRA. The topics of discussion included the organisational structure of the ERRA and its essential coordination activities. Clarification is expected in the coming weeks. As regards the programming activities, these are concentrating on winterising shelter. Earthquake resistant technologies were discussed and self-help shelter activities are taking place. ILO also established employment information centres on the ground.
- **WFP: Reduction of helicopters:** Discussions are ongoing on the possibility of extending the current capacity of helicopters in the field. Discussions are focussing in particular on the German helicopters and the French fuel farm, which are both operating under the NATO umbrella. If this capacity cannot remain in country, other options will have to be considered, including the commercial hiring of helicopters.

<p><i>Follow-up Action point:</i> WFP to inform the IASC TF at its next meeting on the status of the discussions on NATO assets to be left behind in country.</p>
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- **WHO:** 16 hospitals are operating in the affected area and will do so until March. A serious concern was expressed by WHO and UNICEF on the effect any reduction of the helicopter capacity would have on the health assistance due to the strong dependency on this capacity. As regards the exit strategy for the health actors, this is being prepared as much as possible by trying to link the emergency structures to permanent structures in the affected areas. As regards the Early Warning surveillance system, the aim is to expand the surveillance from 60% of the registered diseases to 80%. On the funding side, WHO stressed again that it had only received around half of the funds that it appealed for and that it would need to stop operations, should the funds not materialize soon. It also highlighted the crucial importance of funding for NGOs, especially in the health sector, as they are important implementing partners. Many NGOs are currently in a dramatic funding situation.
- **UNOSAT:** Maps illustrating snow cover over Pakistan are being made available on a daily basis and free of charge by UNOSAT on its website (www.unosat.org). On the front page of the website, a link takes the user directly to the map of the day and to the previous maps. Other maps are also available which show damage caused by the earthquake.

Other concerns/ messages:

- **Exit strategy:** OCHA informed the TF members that all clusters will be working specifically on the exit strategy this week. OCHA will be hosting an exploratory meeting with the ERRA this week and a joint OCHA/ UNDP workshop will be held on 13 January 2006.
- **Access to Neelum Valley:** Doubts were expressed about the ability of the Pakistani army to keep the Neelum Valley road open throughout the whole winter.
- **Fire safety in tents:** Fire safety in tents has become a main priority. All agencies should promote this to the maximum extent possible.
- **Member States Briefing, 21. December 2005:** OCHA gave a brief account of the Member States briefing that was held last week, on 21. December. The meeting was relatively well attended with over 30 Member States present and 6 agencies. The Pakistani Ambassador gave a detailed presentation, followed by the HC and the Senior

Humanitarian Advisor both linked up by videoconference. The main points made by the Pakistani Ambassador were: 1) that things are moving on the ground but that much more still needs to be done; 2) that most of the aid was so far only pledged and has not yet materialized. The HC gave a general overview of the situation on the ground and highlighted the two main lessons learned: 1) there is no substitute for national leadership. 2) UN reform is possible; it is being done on the ground: the relief efforts in the cluster approach are well integrated and well coordinated under the umbrella of the FRC. The HC also stressed the situation of shelter needs. He mentioned that needs are different for the following groups: 1) The priority for the people above the snow line (about 0,5 million) is to speed up the deliveries of iron sheets for roofing; 2) The priority for the people below the snowline (but who are not in camps; about 2 million) is to winterise the tents/shelter; 3) The priority for the people living in camps, mostly in spontaneous camps (about 0,25 million people) are adequate water and sanitation equipment in the camps. The need for a continued flow of funds from donors was highlighted in the member states briefing.

- **Funding:** At the Member States briefing on 21 December, ECHO announced that it had decided to allocate an additional € 25 million to the humanitarian efforts in Pakistan.

Follow-up Action point: Agencies are encouraged to contact ECHO to apply for these funds.

2) AOB

- **Cluster review:** On Monday, 26 December the opportunity and need for a cluster review was brought up in the heads of clusters meeting. UN Agencies as well as NGOs showed a lot of interest in the cluster review. Another meeting should be held on Wednesday to brainstorm on a questionnaire and the TORs of a field mission to Pakistan to carry out a Real Time Evaluation (RTE) of the cluster process. Draft of the questionnaire will be shared with the IASC TF members by OCHA for feedback. The field mission is scheduled for end of January/beginning of February (it was decided that there will be no preparatory visit and the evaluation will be undertaken only through one mission). The mission's composition should be decided soon. The possibility of including a representative from the Sphere Project, IFRC or ICVA was mentioned. WFP highlighted the fact that on 16 and 17 February, there will be the Montreux Retreat and that it would be very useful to have a document ready by then on the real time evaluation of the Pakistan experience.

Follow-up Action point: Agencies are kindly requested to provide any feedback on the composition of this mission and any views/ comments on the real time evaluation of the cluster process questionnaire (once it is sent around) to Guido Galli (galli@un.org) and Suzanne Frueh (frueh@un.org).

- **Relief, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation meeting:** An important meeting was held on 26 December in Islamabad to discuss the link between relief and reconstruction with particular emphasis on the role of NGOs in the current operations in the earthquake-affected areas of Pakistan. For the first time, all relevant actors (both international and national) were brought together in one forum. Participants included the Federal Government, the Federal Relief Commission (FRC), the Earthquake Relief and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA), the Government of the Pakistan-administered Kashmir, approximately 100 national NGOs, over 50 international NGOs and the UN. Some of the major points discussed included the necessary involvement of local people in reconstruction, the importance of preventing beneficiaries' dependency on aid, and the best strategy to make clusters feed more effectively into the structure and functioning of Government efforts.

NEXT IASC TF MEETING: Tuesday, 3rd January 2006, 15:30 GVA time