

DRAFT
Shelter & NFI Coordination Meeting
Held at UNHCR on 19th November 2009 at 15.00

Participants:

Christopher Bender	ACTED	Country Director
Matthew Todd	ASB	Country Director
Olivier Brouant	ECHO	Technical Assistant
P. Rubenthiran	FORUT	Humanitarian Coordinator
Giovanni Cassani	IOM	Head of Emergency
Ines Pankrath	SAH	Country Representative
David Evans	UN- HABITAT	Chief Advisor
Laurent Raguin	UNHCR	Senior Programme Officer (chairing)
Alejandro Ruiz-Acevedo	UNOPS	Project Development Officer
Jorike Looij	ZOA	Management Trainee
M.H.C. Mushin	Malteser International	Program Coordinator
Sanja Saputantri	CARE International	Head of RSS
Deirdre Kiernan	UNICEF	Chief Field Operations
Natasha Yatawara	Relief International	Programme Assistant
K. Vyasah	Internews	Programme Producer
Malcolm Rodgers	OXFAM GB	Protection Advisor
Charmain Mohamed	NRC	Protection / Advocacy Advisor
James Stephenson	UMCOR	Program Manager
Dubravka Pem	WVL	HEA Director
P. Rubenthiran	FORUT	Humanitarian Coordinator
Mithsiri Dias	CARITAS	Assistant Manager
Julian Jones	ICRC	WAT-HAB Coordinator
Ashanthi Liana	Sewalanka	Psychosocial Monitoring Officer
Drene Sariffodeen	UNHCR	Associate Programme Officer
Nilkanthi Naranpanawe	UNHCR	Shelter Assistant
Sarah Wimaladharma	UNHCR	Executive Assistant
Dinesh Thalpawila	UNHCR	Shelter Coordination Cell Liaison Officer

The meeting was opened by the chair at 15.15.

1. CHAP update

The meeting was updated that the project sheets were submitted to the Ministry of Resettlement & Disaster Relief Services and the Ministry of Disaster Management & Human Rights.

The letter from Prof. Rajiva, which had been circulated earlier, was discussed. The letter was considered as positive and the comments made to NGOs would be addressed directly with them.

NRC highlighted the comment made by Prof. Rajiva on the Cluster process and requested that the cluster system be explained again to Government.

UNHCR responded that the letter was shared with the RC/HC and it would be his task to meet with the Government. A discussion on the matter would be more appropriate in the Intercluster meeting.

Agencies were requested to upload projects onto the system and inform UNHCR when it is completed.

ACTION: ALL

Agencies that have not yet provided information on 2009 implementation process which was also highlighted in the letter from Prof. Rajiva should do so as soon as possible

ACTION: ALL

2. Return Assistance

On request, UNHCR indicated the contents of the return package which include; the Return NFI kit, the shelter grant, and additional shelter assistance as discussed at last weeks meeting.

ZOA requested clarification on why returnees in Vavuniya had not received any assistance to date.

UNHCR indicated that this was due to the complexity of tracing & identifying the returnees in the Vavuniya area who had been released without papers etc and staying with host families. UNHCR informed that these returnees would receive assistance starting this week.

ZOA requested information on other agencies that were providing additional shelter assistance either in cooperation with IOM & UNOPS or on their own.

Several participants of the meeting indicated that though there was a willingness to assist access to return areas for NGOs was restricted.

ICRC mentioned that though GA in Jaffna had requested particular assistance from ICRC, when it came to obtaining the final approval on the project, PTF has to date not responded.

UNHCR urged NGOs able to provide additional support either to the shelter grant registration process or NFI distribution to contact local UNHCR offices to make district specific arrangements. NGOs were further encouraged to provide additional shelter assistance in areas where they have access and use this as leverage for access to other areas.

ACTION: ALL

UNHCR indicated it was compiling needs assessments of new and old caseload IDPs particularly in the East, where access is less problematic for NGOs, and would share this information with the meeting when it was ready.

ACTION: UNCHR

The biggest hurdle to provision of any assistance is obtaining PTF approval of projects.

It was suggested that the cluster/UNHCR advocate with the PTF for approval of NGO supporting projects. UNHABITAT indicated that such a move would be a high risk strategy and could result in no NGO receiving clearance.

2. Shelter Policy change by SC-Vavuniya

IOM requested to discuss the change of policy by the SC-Vavuniya to provide emergency shelter kits & transitional shelter instead of the previously agreed tarpaulin kit to returnees. IOM indicated that it was not possible for the individual districts to change the policy on shelter assistance.

UNHCR indicated that the policy had been agreed upon previously because the ESKs would be needed for the care and maintenance of Menik Farm in the months to come. If the concern was to use existing stocks, then it could not be decided in Vavuniya, without prior consultation on where there are most needs.

When asked to comment on assistance to closed camps, ECHO indicated that they were not supportive of continued assistance and would not be able to provide funding for this. Several other donors have indicated a similar position. This had been communicated to the government and it appears that this has led to the accelerated return process. However, ECHO mentioned it would be necessary to reassess the situation in a few months.

UNHCR agreed that the accelerated return was indeed in part due to the pressure placed on the Government. At the same time however, return conditions, particularly mine action procedures need to be adhered to and therefore it is equally important to advocate with the government, that return must be safe, and that the camp option is acceptable, as long as it is open. In this case assistance to the IDPs still in displacement can be enhanced.

Regarding the change in policy it was agreed that the final decision on such a change would have to be made at the Colombo level.

SC-V to provide justification for the change in policy and this is to be submitted to Colombo for consideration.

ACTION:SC-V

3. AOB

UMCOR requested that return assessments made by UNHCR and partners in Jaffna are shared with the group. UNHCR agreed to share these as soon as they are made available.

ACTION: UNHCR

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 16.30