

DRAFT

Minutes

Cluster Leads

**9 October 2008, 0900-1100hrs
Chatrium Hotel, Yangon**

Chair: OCHA

1. TCG update (Update OCHA)

- The monthly financial update for August has been finalised (draft shared). It was pointed out that the misc requirements of US\$ 150 million should show appropriate breakdown. (MIMU later circulated the version with corrections.) Agencies are requested to ensure timely and accurate updating to FTS by contacting OCHA Geneva through their respective HQs.
- The recent TCG confirmed that the vehicle importation issue has to be address to counterpart line ministries.
- Whilst no official change of policy has been announced, it appears that 3-month visa is now being granted (at least to some).

2. Cluster approach ways forward (Brainstorming)

- OCHA inter-cluster coordinator had earlier circulated initial points for consideration with regard to the cluster approach ways forward.
- It was clarified that the cluster activation requires ERC's sign off upon request by the HCT. The procedure for the de-activation should be confirmed with the HRSU in OCHA Geneva.
- Whilst the UNCT recently agreed that the clusters with dedicated coordinators should stay until the end of the Flash Appeal, i.e., April 2009, some questioned the relationship between the duration of the Appeal and the cluster approach with current form and capacity. It was pointed out that the Nargis Appeal contains agriculture recovery and early recovery.
- The floor generally agreed on the continuing need for coordination through recovery and reconstruction and that the momentum for engaging the Government gained largely through the TCG should not be lost. It was understood that the clusters are activated to coordinate emergency response. The Revised Appeal captures both relief and early recovery which was strongly advised, supported by donors, facilitates the complexity of Myanmar environment and donor restrictions. Whether the clusters are the best mechanism to coordinate prevailingly early and long-term recovery was questioned by some. There were thematic working groups which existed prior to the cyclone response, for instance (WASH).
- There were diverging views and uncertainty as to what it means to have active "cluster approach." Does it have to have dedicated cluster coordinators? It was pointed out that the responsibilities agreed with lead agencies at the global level, e.g., provider of last resort, and accountability and predictability, accompany the lead agencies while the clusters are officially active. Once de-activated (and turned into a dormant cluster approach), and /or once a different mechanism was set up (out of official clusters and eg by themes and through working groups for example) the support from global cluster leads will be lost .
- Cluster activation/de-activation does not apply uniformly across sectors. Some can phase out earlier than the others, depending on the context. The approach can be adjusted during the different phases of the operation. The transition from the clusters to something else is inevitable but the question is the appropriate timing and what comes after the de-activation. While de-activated, HCT can still undertake cluster approach to matters such as contingency planning.
- Some cluster indicated to continue till end of appeal period, other (eg. Education) plans to phase out by Dec 2008).

- Continuation of cluster co-chairing was suggested to be looked at. Eventually one chair could continue.
- Shortage of financial resources to keep the dedicated cluster coordinated in place was felt not a strong and valid argument to phase out. There are ways to identify funding in this regard which should be explored if needed (eg. HC approaching global cluster leads.)
- Whilst some clusters are necessarily working very closely with line ministries and filling the void in coordination by the Government, coordination should be increasingly led by the Government. There are however some apprehension that preserving independence and neutrality of aid community is important especially in the operational environment such as Myanmar.
- Whatever emerge as agreed as a way forward, the demand for support for coordination in the field must be fully taken into consideration. In fact, some organisations are already diverting such capacities from Yangon to hubs.

3. Information Management (Update MIMU)

- A copy of briefing kit, compiled for the HC's trip to Europe, was shared for information. It contains the products generated by the most recent 3W exercise.
- MIMU continues the gap analysis, based on the recent 3Ws and various other assessments.
- IMM update is due next week.

4. PONREPP (Update OCHA & RC Office)

- A revised guidance note was shared.
- Apart from the addition of shelter as the 6th area of cooperation, now separated from DRR, the Ministry of Social Welfare has agreed that protection shall be covered outside of PONREPP umbrella, through which a project will be developed for resource mobilisation.
- DFID and EU have already expressed interest in PONREPP.
- Local NGOs have expressed strong interest in taking part of PONREPP.
- A consultation with the Government by TWG/cluster representatives is scheduled for 5 November in Nay Pyi Taw.
- RC office is requested to keep clusters updated on the details on the PONREPP development so that they can appropriately inform partners in good time.
- The ownership of PONREPP was questioned – to be clarified.

5. Periodic Review (Update ASEAN)

- The update information sheet was shared.
- Recruitment of various positions continues.
- The questionnaire is being tested and will be translated next week.
- Interested partners are requested to nominate enumerators. In total, 80 enumerators are required, for which the Government has committed 30. They will receive training. The project team will circulate TOR.

6. AOB

- A serious concern was raised and noted as to why the education cluster was omitted from the draft Early Recovery Strategic Framework, shared on-line with stakeholders.