

Education Cluster Meeting

Thursday 7 August 2008

11:00 – 13:00, Chatrium Hotel.

Co-Chair: Charles Avelino

Present: 15 participants from 12 organisations

- 1) Introduction and welcome
 - MoE representatives will be invited to one of the next two upcoming cluster meetings.
- 2) Action points from last meeting
 - Agencies to share proposal with cluster leads to enable them to prepare cover letter.
 - Plan International sent a letter to the NDPCC coordinating body with copy to DEPT expressing interest in submitting a proposal to work. The proposal is in the final stages of preparation at Plan regional office, and will be shared with cluster leads soon for submission to the NDPCC.
 - Agencies seeking approval from government to implement their activities to meet with the cluster co-chairs bilaterally on 24th & 25th from 12:00 – 16:00 at the Chatrium Hotel lobby.
 - Only one organisation met with Cluster Leads.
 - Co-chairs shared draft Education Early Recovery Strategy by email 28 July.
 - 3W (who what where) inputs from agencies.
 - No updates received recently. MIMU has produced an Education 3W map at township level based on the data provided in July.
- 3) Reporting requirements: commodity tracking and monthly financial expenditure.
 - OCHA has requested each cluster to submit information monthly on amounts of funding committed to date for commodities, transportation and salaries, for compilation by OCHA and onward transfer to Tripartite Core Group/GoUM. Paper copies of the format were distributed in the meeting, and IM Focal Point will send out soft copy (**Action point**). This month's submissions are due by 25 August. OCHA offered to attend cluster meeting to explain the requirements if partners thought this would be useful.
- 4) Updates from the field and inputs for the weekly sitrep
 - Cluster Co-lead Shirley Long is on a field visit to Pyapon, Bogale and Mawlamyinegyun this week, looking in particular at information flow and coordination at the township level, and with an aim to identify local partners.
 - UNICEF described ongoing challenges in logistics and distribution of significant amounts of materials in the pipeline. There is no warehouse capacity in the field. Road transportation to Pyapon and Bogale is already closed, and materials instead need to be shipped. TEOs are also very occupied. Distribution of textbooks and roofing sheets is being strengthened at the township level. Roofing sheets are available from UNICEF if partners know of schools needing repair, and are also available for repair of staff housing within school compounds.
 - UNICEF shared news of recently approved changes in procedures for provision of supplies to partners. For supply amounting to less than US\$5,000 in value, only a letter of request is now needed. For supply amounting to more than US\$5,000 a simplified 2-page MoU needs to be entered into, including details of beneficiaries and with reporting requirement. Agreements can be made at either Yangon or field levels. If shipping is needed then the Representative or Officer-in-Charge is required to sign. The whole process should be quite quick. UNICEF will share documents with cluster partners (**Action point**).

- Myanmar NGO Network described five village schools other side of Mawlamyinegyun where teachers and students need supplies. List of other schools will be sent and will discuss with UNICEF for access.
- 5) School construction presentation from Development Workshop (DW)
- Vietnam suffers regular natural disasters, including typhoons and flooding. DW is working on community-based DRR with a focus on reducing economic loss associated with damage to housing.
 - Over the years, there has been progressive investment by people in making their houses better, but not safer. Subsequently, each disaster leads to massive and more costly damage: an average of US\$1,000 damage each time, financed by borrowing.
 - Existing buildings can be strengthened using cheap adaptations that can be applied to different types of buildings.
 - Local government involvement in Vietnam is fostered as a long-term carrier. A 1½ day rapid training is held in every commune and with village leaders, leading to 40-60 persons per commune with the necessary skills. DW establishes a Damage Prevention Committee in each village, which influences policy change, official buy-in and back-up.
 - New buildings undergo assessment, and older buildings are retrofitted. DW uses school classrooms to demonstrate, and DRR is included in the curriculum. They also work with kindergartens and children.
 - Families and communes both provide financial support for building improvements, which they are ready to finance based on evidence of survival.
 - Initial suggestions for the Myanmar context.
 - Save the Children is DW's partner in Myanmar.
 - Reconstruction is a popular initiative, which is now in the temporary phase. The challenge is raising and sustaining awareness on the need to build back better, as later may revert to the same ways as before.
 - Risk Evaluation should be carried out on surviving schools, to see if they can be retrofitted, paying attention to around 10 points of weakness.
 - It was noted here in Myanmar that CGI roofs are too flat, and that raising the pitch would reduce risk of roof loss. Large overhangs are also a source of risk.
 - A smaller technical working group is being convened on construction, to make recommendations. Specialists are taking a number of factors into consideration for school design (including geography and climate). John Norton (DW) is here until Tuesday 12 August, and will be included in the cluster email list. Expertise can be made available from Vietnam.
 - Safety of buildings also declines with time, and inspection systems are needed to maintain a level of disaster resistance that is not declining. Humidity and salt corrosion speed decline, and metal has life of only 5 years in such conditions.
 - Advocacy is needed for disaster-proofing. Disaster resistance can be delivered as positive, good news: there is something that can be done.
- 6) AOB
- Cluster meeting schedule. OCHA proposed to have most cluster meetings in one week, and the Education Cluster will meet fortnightly on Wednesdays at 2pm starting from next Wednesday 13th. Any input for the agenda should be sent to IMEduCluster@gmail.com
 - OCHA sitreps are now weekly on Thursdays, and inputs are requested by 10am on Thursdays.
 - **Action point:** Recirculate the draft ER strategy document for comments.
 - Two meetings today at Traders, the first at 12:30, on health centre designs and on general building designs.