



UNITED NATIONS

NATIONS UNIES

Office of the United Nations Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia

UNCT Meeting
Friday, 9th May 2008
Minutes

Participants: RC/HCAI (FAO), IOM, OCHA, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNDSS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, WFP, WHO

1) Presentation on the SOMT Workplan and ways to improve SOMT/UNCT interaction

The Chair of the SOMT presented their 2008 workplan, which was approved pending a few minor amendments. The salary survey should be incorporated to document ongoing work. Options for putting UN agencies into one UN compound where possible should also be reflected. In parallel, a review of Dahabshiil should take place as one Agency noted services were taking long. It was also noted that a minimum standards for cars rentals was issued but Agencies are not compliant. Memos/guidance will be made available online on the SOMT page of the UNCT website for future reference. DSS requested that the Deputy CSA be part of the SOMT in future.

Regarding ways to improve SOMT-UNCT interaction, the following points were agreed: the SOMT should comprise senior representatives than can speak on behalf of the agency; the Chair of the SOMT member will be present in each UNCT to report on constraints and periodically on progress on implementation of their workplan; RCO to continue participating in SOMT to provide additional linkages to the UNCT; UNDP will appoint a full-time secretary to the SOMT (G4-level) charged to cost-sharing budget.

2) Proposals from SOMT regarding issues of concern raised by national staff in Somalia

A draft letter was circulated to respond to the concerns raised by staff in Somalia during the Acting RC's mission to Puntland in March. The UNCT agreed that in principle, UN LPs should be given to national staff for official missions, emergency medical evacuations and possible re-location, kept under lock and key by the office manager. Agencies agreed to implement this UNCT decision to the extent possible, agreeing that if the LP is used for non-official travel, it would be noted in the staff member's personnel file. It was also agreed that all persons on UN contracts, regardless of the type, would be entitled to medical evacuation in life-saving cases (case evacuation.) The UNCT also agreed that due to hyperinflation in Somalia, a top up salary would be provided to persons on UN contracts as a special emergency temporary measure, as per the example of the UN in Iraq. All Agencies agreed that this was possible bearing in mind that in principle, the UNCT can change a rule to make it applicable to Somalia, so long as it is in line with HQ rules.

Actions:

- SOMT to propose one supplement allowance for all UN contract holders
- UNDP to contact HQ (UNDP/BOM and ICSC) once the allowance is agreed

3) Feedback to the Prime Minister on the ‘Humanitarian Focal Point’ issue (OCHA) (20 mins)

OCHA reported that the PM asked for names of potential candidates for the Humanitarian Focal Point, but none were provided. The PM is more in favor of a network for reasons of legitimacy and neutrality, and suggested a role for the Somali Red Crescent Society. Agencies agreed that SRCS can cross clan lines and political boundaries throughout Somalia, however it has not acted as a coordinating body before. It was also noted that the SRSG cautioned that if one individual is named, he/she could become more powerful than the PM and may not be seen as neutral.

Action:

- OCHA’s Senior IDP Advisor will lead the development of a TOR for discussion at the next IASC. The humanitarian focal point/network should be impartial and have senior authority.

4) Updates from Information Group (OCHA) (20 mins)

The Information Group 2008 Workplan was presented to the UNCT in February. At that meeting, the UNCT asked for more substantive details on the budget and activities, and for the key messages to be revised. As a result, the IG budget was broken down and re-presented for UNCT approval. The UNCT endorsed the activities included in the workplan. DSS requested to be included in the BBC monitoring service alerts. WFP raised a concern on joint media trips as it organizes its own media missions. WFP and OCHA agreed to discuss the modalities of joint media trips separately. The UNCT agreed, however, that media should be coordinated better in future. The UNCT endorsed the budget and agreed it would be charged to the cost-sharing budget.

OCHA is also arranging a training for Cluster Leads and the UNCT on media. UNICEF has already planned a training event for senior management on media in September; some UNCT representatives may participate in that event. Two options were tabled: have the Cluster Leads/UNCT media training in September immediately following the UNICEF training, or if it was viewed as urgent, the OCHA training could be organized in June. OCHA will liaise with the Agencies on their preferred option. The UNCT agreed that Agencies should pay for their own participation in the training.

Action:

- OCHA to follow up on how many Agencies would participate in the media training (on a self-pay basis) and when the training should take place.

5) Update from the Joint M+E Team (M+E Team Leader) (15 mins)

UNICEF presented a summary on the work of the UNTP M&E Team to date, noting a challenge due to the fact that Agencies work differently; some are more centralized, others are considerably more decentralized. Nonetheless, it has been agreed in principle that there are no separate M&E systems outside of the Lead Agency system. The M&E Team is developing a set of tools to monitor implementation of the UNTP, and in particular to collect information for the next quarterly report and mid-year review. It was agreed that monitoring information for the UNTP should be collected at zonal level (SLD/PLD) to the extent possible, and at Nairobi level (SCZ). Some Agencies expressed that they have more capacity to do so in Nairobi, but agreed that symbolically it is important to empower staff and ensure a sense of ownership in the field. Lead Agencies in Nairobi should support their counterparts in the field in this regard to manage the process. In the case of Joint Programmes,

and especially the Joint UN Team on AIDS Workplan, the coordinating Agencies should compile the information to avoid duplication in reporting.

DSS noted that the planning scenarios for the UNTP should be better linked to the current political and security situation. DSS would be available to discuss this with the Lead Agencies.

Action:

- RCO to organize a meeting between DSS and the Lead Agencies prior to the next PWG updating scenarios.

6) AOB:

AMISOM Workshop: Scheduled to take place on 20-21 May. RCO to circulate any additional information.

The new RC/HC/RR/DO is scheduled to arrive on 15th May. A BBQ is being arranged for 16th May for all UNCT members. His first two weeks will mainly focus on outreach to donors and key NGO partners, as well as missions to Somalia to meet the respective authorities.

There is a proposal to have a mini-retreat for the UNCT, possibly combined with the SMT training during the 3rd week of June; RCO to follow-up.

OCHA is planning to organize a contingency planning process with Cluster Chairs. The CERF is short of cash by \$4-6 million. A proposal is being developed for a maximum of \$10 million, of which \$7 million will be for WFP (to address the food pipeline until June), \$1-2 million for UNICEF (nutrition) and \$.5 million for UNHCR (protection.) It is unlikely that this amount will be received in full or at the same time. Nonetheless, there is a need to focus on implementation capacity of CERF projects.

The 'open letter' to the Somali people was signed off and circulated to the UNCT, who should circulate to all UN staff. The letter will also go to the Somali press.

UNDP noted it has taken on an additional compound in Hargeisa. Interested agencies should express their interest. IOM and UN-Habitat noted they may do so.

** Next UNCT meeting: Friday, 23rd May 2008 , 8.00 – 9.30am*