

Batticaloa Emergency Watsan Coordination Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: 23 May 2007/ 9.30AM

Location: UNICEF

Chair: NWSDB/ UNICEF

Attendees: NRC, ICRC, VOVCOD, World Vision, Merlin, PS Kokkaddicolai, PS Arayampathy, Kattankudy Urban Council, PS Vavunitivu, WUSC-SL, IRD, NWSDB, Archenova, ACLG, IOM, MSF-France, IOM, ACF, UNOPS/SCC, Oxfam GB, UNOCHA, UNHCR, ACTED, Solidarite, PS Chenkalady

1. Area update by DS Division:

Vaharai:

- ICRC informed that 70 families living in tents outside of the Alankulam Camp have agreed to move into shelters.
- NWSDB and UNICEF to conduct joint site visit on Friday to the resettled areas of Vaharai Division.
- UNHCR was not present to provide clarification about the status of the tents along Colombo main road.

Action Points

- ⇒ ACLG to follow-up with PS Valachchenai again about garbage collection in Alankulam.
- ⇒ UNOPS to follow-up with UNHCR regarding Alankulam 2 site status.
- ⇒ UNICEF and NWSDB to provide update from joint visit.

Valaichenai:

- Oxfam informed that there are no major updates. 30 latrines have been decommissioned.
- Oxfam and NRC have provided draft guidelines for decommissioning of toilets to UNICEF. UNICEF noted that aside from the technical side of decommissioning, the coordination group should also have clear procedures regarding the necessary approval/ supervision and handover of decommissioned facilities to local responsible government authorities and/or private landowners.

Action points:

- ⇒ UNICEF will circulate draft decommissioning guidelines to toilet construction agencies for comments.

Chenkalady:

- World Vision reported that the Division water bowsering program is on-going. World Vision did not have the specific details of water volumes supplied to camps.
- Oxfam reported no new issues.
- UNOPS informed that they conducted an assessment and gaps were identified in the water bowsering program and handpumps for domestic water supply were broken in several camps, notably Palacholai and NRC Eastern University.
- ACTED plans to construct 16 toilets at NRC Eastern University site, starting tomorrow. Eight emergency toilet units are planned for Mylampavoli site.
- UNICEF asked ICRC if they would consider the installation of on-site water sources at Koralankerny and Mavitevambu sites to the reduce bowsering requirements in the Division.
- ICRC to consider the feasibility of on-site sources. There is a short-cut route between Mavitibambu that only takes 3 minutes by tractor. A pipeline improvement is planned for the Koralankerny site.
- Oxfam informed that they have handed over the operation of one gully sucker to the PS Secretary for use in the Division.

Action points:

- ⇒ World Vision to provide detailed update about the bowsering situation in Chenkalady.
- ⇒ World Vision to consider installation of domestic water supply sources at NRC Eastern University, either tubewells or open wells.

- ⇒ UNOPS Quick fix-it team to repair broken handpumps at Palacholai and 2 Eastern University sites.
- ⇒ ICRC to assess feasibility of on-site water systems at 2 sites and the short-cut route from Koralankerny to Mavitivambu.

Manmunai North:

- UNICEF informed that the DS meeting had been cancelled on Tuesday. Planning is on-going by the DS/ ADS and NRC/UNHCR to move IDPs from temporary sites to improved locations and to consolidate camps once the total population of IDPs in the Division decreases.
- NRC informed that discussions are on-going about the final list of camps to be recommended for longer-term occupancy. The list recommended by Shelter and Watsan agencies is now under review by the UNHRC Protection unit.
- UNICEF informed that requests were received for bathing space screening at several camps and asked if any agencies have capacity to install the screening. If so, UNICEF can provide the plastic tarps.
- UNOPS informed that the UNOPS-NRC Quick-fixit team is now operating exclusively in Manmunai North and can install the screening.
- Archenova informed that water bowsering operations are on-going and will reduce as the resettlement reduces the daily drinking water supply demand.

Action points:

- ⇒ UNICEF and UNOPS-NRC Q-Fix-it team to coordinate installation of bathing area screening.

Arayampathy:

- Merlin informed that there is a gully sucking problem in Arayampathy.
- Oxfam informed they have handed over one gully sucker for operation by the PS Office, so that should improve the service.
- Archenova informed that they are waiting for requests from toilet construction agencies to install tubewells & handpumps for the new toilet installations.
- ACTED reported that 8 UNICEF-ACTED emergency toilets were installed at Selvenegar East Annex.
- IRD informed that UNICEF-IRD emergency toilets were installed at Mavilankanthuri (12 units), NECDEP (12 units), Forut Building (4), Forut Building Annex (2).
- UNICEF requested to ACTED to reassess the need for additional toilets at Social Care Center. The camp had been planned to close; however, the center is still in use as a camp.
- Oxfam informed that not enough volume of drinking water was being delivered to the camps that Oxfam is responsible for in Arayampathy. Oxfam requested clarification from World Vision about the volumes of water delivered to camps per day by the PS/ World Vision bowsering program and if these volumes could be increased to meet the minimum standard of 5 liters/person/day. If necessary Oxfam can provide additional water supply using their bowser trucks.
- UNICEF requested to PS Technical Officer and World Vision to provide the details of the Arayampathy bowsering program and coordinate with Oxfam.
- IRD informed that there is no access for the gully sucker to the Oxfam constructed toilets in Vedkurudipu 2 camp. Oxfam explained that the ZOA has committed to construct the internal, but has stopped new construction activities for the next couple weeks to reassess the needs after the resettlement activities are underway.
- UNICEF updated that the land for the Gully sucker Dumping station has been allocated by the DS and the procedures are underway for gaining approval of the site from the responsible local government agencies.

Action points:

- ⇒ ACTED to assess need for emergency toilets at Social Care Center camp.
- ⇒ PS Technical Officer and World Vision to provide the details of the Arayampathy bowsering program and coordinate with Oxfam if needed to provide additional supply.
- ⇒ Oxfam to provide update about the gully sucking operations.

⇒ Oxfam/ Zoa to provide update about the internal road construction at Vedkurudipu 2 camp.

Kaluwanchikudy:

- Solidarite informed that resettlement of IDPs from Kaluwanchikudy camps to Porateevu Pattu Division is on-going. Ontachimadam and SLTB1&2 camps have been closed. Mahiloor will be closed in 1-2 days. Thursday is the DS meeting, so more details will be provided about the plan for the closure & consolidation of camps.
- UNICEF informed to UNHCR that Periyakalar Camp was not included on the list of recommended sites circulated by NRC; however Periyakalar camp has better facilities and site conditions than Eruvil Thoddam (flooded site), which was included on the list. UNICEF asked if there were any reason for this selection. UNHRC replied that the list is still under review and has not yet been presented to government officials.
- UNOPS asked agencies to inform them immediately when sites are going to be closed. Oxfam recommended that UNOPS attend the DS meeting to find out the current government plan.
- Solidarite informed that one water bowser truck had a traffic accident on Monday and the attendant was in the hospital. The other Solidarite trucks are covering the water supply routes, as the demand is less due to resettlement and closure of camps.
- Solidarite reported that the STF rejected the water from Ontachimadam due to the “bad smell” and requested that water no longer be collected from that source, and instead use Kurrukulmadam. Solidarite has conducted water quality analysis of the water, which indicates that it meets Sri Lankan Drinking Water Standards, and that chlorination is taking place by Bowser operators.
- WUSC-SL informed they received complaints about the gully sucker service. The PS reports indicate that gully sucking has occurred; however the camp managers and watsan focal points are saying that the work was not completed.
- UNICEF recommended that the gully sucker tracking sheets be used by the camp managers to record the time and date of the gully sucking. The camp records can then be cross-referenced with the PS reports to ensure that the services are delivered.

Action points:

- ⇒ Solidarite, World Vision, PS Secretary, and APV to coordinate to reorient water bowsering program based on the latest situation.
- ⇒ WUSC-SL and WatSan focal points to initiate the use of the gully sucker tracking sheets at all remaining camps.

DPDHS update

- No representative was present from the DPDHS office.

Decommissioning:

- NRC requested that agencies send their decommissioning plans to UNICEF.
- UNICEF recommended that agencies consider handing over facilities to host communities or organizations where possible. Agencies should be particularly clear about their intentions for “moveable assets” such as water tanks and stands. If the agencies plan to reclaim these items from the camp, then they should inform the responsible camp manager and GS. If agencies are considering donations to local government, UNICEF recommended that the items be donated to ACLG inventory (District-wide) and then they can be assigned for storage and “emergency preparedness” in the respective PS Offices (Division level) throughout the District.
- UNICEF reported that NRC and Oxfam have provided guidelines for the decommissioning of toilets. UNICEF will forward to the toilet construction agencies for comments. The plan is for the Batticaloa Watsan Coordination group to develop standard technical guidelines and procedures for use by all agencies. A separate meeting is needed with ACLG and DPDHS to discuss decommissioning issues.
- Oxfam informed that they will decommission everything they built.

- UNOPS informed that they can take salvageable materials that can be reused. They are establishing a salvage yard for storage. Agencies can coordinate with UNOPS to provide these decommissioned materials.
- Archenova informed that for decommissioning they plan to handover to local communities where possible. If not, the salvageable items will be reused and rubble used to make roads.

Action points:

- ⇒ Agencies requested to provide decommissioning plans to UNICEF
- ⇒ Agencies without plans for decommissioning should contact NRC
- ⇒ Agencies wishing to donate salvageable items should contact UNOPS.
- ⇒ UNICEF to forward draft toilet decommissioning guidelines to the toilet construction agencies for comments.

Resettlement:

- NWSDB informed that a joint assessment trip was conducted by UNICEF and NWSDB on the previous day. Meetings were held with the PS Secretary, Program officer, and several village leaders to discuss the present situation.
- Currently 3 NWSDB bowsers (1 x 7000L, 2 x 6000L) and 2 PS Porateevu patu tractor and trailers (2x 4000L) are providing drinking water to resettled areas of Velavelly daily. Pradesa Saba well cleaning program is underway, 1300 wells have been cleaned to date. The PS laborers are moving the water storage tanks each day to the new GN villages to be resettled, then well cleaning activities take place. Once well cleaning is completed in the village then the water tanks are moved away. Bowsering by the NWSDB is scheduled to stop on May 30, when the resettlement and well cleaning activities are completed.
- UNICEF informed that some of the resettled areas are facing water scarcity problems due to the dry season. The PS Secretary & TO identified 13 GN divisions where the existing drinking water wells do not produce sufficient quantities of water and thus bowsering operations are conducted annually by the PS from May to September.
- UNICEF informed that some problems with well cleaning practices were observed. One well had been emptied rapidly and fine sediments suspended causing elevated turbidity levels. The well cleaning guidelines should be finalized, translated and disseminated as soon as possible to the PS laborers to avoid further problems.
- Mearch raised the concern that improper cleaning of wells can cause permanent damage to the well and the laborers. No untrained persons should undertake cleaning wells.
- NWSDB informed that several communities with water problems have India Mark 3 handpumps, but they are not functioning. Simple repairs are needed to return these wells to service.
- ICRC informed that the “software: side of the three tier system did not function properly. The handpumps are typically not used for 2-3 months per year, so then the washers dry out and the pump does not function properly during the dry season.
- UNICEF informed that they are developing a new proposal to reinitiate the three tier system. ICRC/ Merlin informed that they are keen to provide technical advice if needed.

Action points:

- ⇒ UNICEF to email draft Well Cleaning Guidelines for Inland wells in Conflict-affected areas for review and comment.

AOB:

- UNOPS asked if any agencies had heat sealed torn water tank tap outlets. There were no experiences reported .by other agencies.
- UNICEF informed that they are coordinating an assessment of school facilities damaged by IDP occupancy with ZDE.

Next meeting: Wednesday 6th June at 09.30 AM at UNICEF conference room.