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## Recovery and Reconstruction Working Group Launch Meeting Minutes 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015

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### Welcome Remarks, DUDBC Deputy Director General, Mr. Rabi Shah

- Mr. Shah welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the Vice Chairperson of NPC Dr. Govinda Pokharel, Joint Secretaries from ministries of Urban Development, Home Affairs, DG and DDGs of DUDBC, and representatives of various agencies.
- Mr. Shah spoke very highly of the shelter response to date and the efforts of the Shelter Cluster partners, and also highlighted key materials produced by the Shelter Cluster, such as the 4W reporting, gap analysis, and the recovery and reconstruction survey, which have supported the Government of Nepal (GoN) with policy making
- Mr. Shah also provided background on the establishment of the RRWG which was initiated from the Shelter Cluster (SC) Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) as an important step in the SC exit strategy

### Shelter Cluster Nepal Update on Recovery and Reconstruction, Mr. Tom Bamforth (Shelter Cluster Coordinator) and Mr. PS Joshi (UN-Habitat)

- An overview of the Shelter Cluster Nepal was provided, including outlining the SC coordination architecture and district coordination structure
- The SC recently conducted a recovery and reconstruction survey as part of the preparation work for the establishment of the RRWG and the responses indicate that as a group the Partner Organisations (POs) have a huge level of resources available for recovery and reconstruction, including over 400 engineers registered with the Nepal Engineering Council (NEC), and over 200 million USD in confirmed funding for recovery and reconstruction
- The objective of the RRWG is to provide a platform for coordination, strategic planning, and technical guidance for agencies involved in longer term recovery and reconstruction, and to engage with the GoN and other key stakeholders to inform the wider housing reconstruction programme
- The RRWG has been established as part of the Shelter Cluster exit strategy and the transition to longer term recovery and reconstruction and will be led by a collaboration between UN Habitat and IOM, with continued support from the SC up to the close of the SC at the end of 2015
- The SC recovery position paper was shared with all participants, and is an important reference document which is shaping the work that the RRWG needs to do and provides guidance for agencies planning recovery and informs GoN and others on the potential contribution of the POs to the wider reconstruction programme
- The SC, through the RRWG advocates for technical assistance to be planned and implemented in time and at scale under a collective approach. Given the large number of POs that intend to work on recovery and reconstruction a collective approach is essential to ensure optimisation of resources, providing the space for the strengths of organisations to be utilised to the greatest extent possible, and to ensure that the efforts of all POs are complementary to and aligned with the GoN reconstruction programme.

- The SC advocates for a blanket approach to technical assistance with not even one corner of the earthquake affected areas of the country to be left out, a collective approach is required for quality assurance and equity of assistance.
- The breadth of the scope of technical assistance was outlined, and it was emphasised that technical assistance is not just training and not just technical training, but includes awareness raising, training of trainers, demonstration houses, settlement level efforts, social mobilisation, and outreach efforts.
- The RRWG will provide coordination between POs and the GoN at policy and implementation level and will require all involved to work together to address issues and challenges that will arise as a group.

#### **Key Note Address, National Planning Commission (NPC) Vice-Chairperson, Dr. Govind Pokhrel**

- Dr. Pokhrel expressed gratitude for the progress that has been made so far on the coordination of POs for the housing recovery and reconstruction, in particular as this removed some of the burden from the GoN
- The bureaucratic issues affecting the establishment of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) and the process required to get the NRA established were briefly touched on, and Dr. Pokhrel informed that as the bill had been registered with parliament already it was hoped that it would be only a few days until it was passed.
- The need for reconstruction to provide households with options which reflect local materials and local architecture was emphasised, as well as the need for reconstruction to respect local cultures and ethnicities.
- The inclusion of vulnerable households in the programme was also touched on, and Dr. Pokhrel informed that he would like to see flexibility in the programme in order to provide greater support to vulnerable households. He also mentioned that work is ongoing around the development of soft loans of a further 2000 USD to be made available to vulnerable households.
- Dr. Pokhrel highlighted that reconstruction does not just involve construction of houses but requires social reconstruction, economic reconstruction, and physical reconstruction and suggested that the main areas of focus for the reconstruction should be capacity building (of all stakeholders), avoiding conflict, and market development.

#### **Closing Remarks, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Chief of Mission, Mr. Maurizio Busatti**

- Mr. Busatti thanked Dr. Pokhrel for providing clarity and direction and highlighted that the aim of the RRWG is to support cohesiveness and coordination, and will require a joint effort from all partners involved
- Mr. Busatti was very encouraged and heartened to hear from Dr. Pokhrel that the bill related to the establishment of the NRA is now with the parliament
- Mr. Busatti highlighted that one key role of Partner Organisations (POs) will be listening to the affected communities and collecting and channelling issues to be aired and addressed, and stressed that there is a heavy burden on all involved given the scale of the impact of the disaster
- Mr. Busatti closed the meeting by informing that IOM are honoured to lead the RRWG with UN Habitat, with support from the Shelter Cluster, and to work with all the partners involved in the group. The RRWG represents an important opportunity to bring together many things that have been moving in parallel to date and to maximise the impact of the component parts of the group under a collective approach

**The next meeting of the RRWG will be held on 30<sup>th</sup> September in Bagaicha Restaurant, Jawalakhel.**