

	Meeting (Name)	
	Date	Ref: 1/2.1/1/06/ Minutes 1

Document Information

Meeting :	Operational Meeting – June 6 th 2008				
Prepared By/ Date:	Niranjani				
Type:	Conference				
Purpose:	Improve Coordination, Facilitation and Networking among agencies, groups and individuals working in the Humanitarian Sector				
Meeting Date:	June 6 th 2008	Start Time:	8.30 am	End Time:	9.40 am
Venue	Caritas SEDEC				
Meeting Chair:	From: 8.30 – 9.45am Ms. Jeane Samuel Country Director - HDI	Facilitator	CHA		
Minute Taker:	Niranjani	Phone:	4610943		

Present

Organisation	Organisation	Organisation
Jen	Leads	WUSC
HDI	WUSC	Americares
MTI	Mercy Corps	Halo Trust
Help Age	Malteser Int	Srilanka Solidarity
International alert	Christian Aid	RDF
World Vision	Helvetas	LWR
AJJDC	NRC	UMCOR
Forut	IHR	Room to Read
Habitat for Humanity	Help	ADRA
PIN	Muslim Aid	DCA
Action Aid	Save the Children	Oxfam
SSI	CIDA PSU	GAA

Agenda No	Subject	Action by/ date
1.	<p>Feedbacks and updates Consultative Committee on Humanitarian Assistance Following decisions were briefed by Hashim The meeting was held on the 3rd June 2008 at the Ministry of Defence, Public Security, Law and Order. Outcome of the meeting as follows;</p> <p>1. Visas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in Issuance of Visa - Delays in specific cases were highlighted. MoD stated that certain applications are scrutinized but by large 95% are approved. • New Visa Policy – New policy for NGOs and the three year rule was tabled. GoSL stated that this is not a new policy but guidelines to existing policy issued by the Ministry of Internal Administration. • Three-year Timeline – Clarification to the three year period was requested. The Chair stated that the rule could be flexible on a case by case depending on expertise, qualification, designation etc. However, it is for the Ministry of Internal Administration to decide as the guidelines were approved following an inter-ministerial committee recommendation. Minister Samarasinghe will arrange for a meeting with the Ministry of IA for further clarification. <p>2. IDP Rations – Rupee Value – CHA requested revision of IDP ration rates which is based on the rupee value which is an emergency issue. The need to complement and provide sustainable livelihood assistance for displaced/resettled families. GoSL suggested a survey on the recipients and increase to those rightfully eligible and cease assistance to those who are stable. Livelihood support beyond the emergency phase as opposed to only rations</p> <p>3. Fuel for Agencies in the Vanni – The percentage fuel approval by the CGES and the further reduction by the Military was tabled. The inadequacy of fuel to implement projects was stressed. Decision for representatives to meet with the CGES, JOH and the Vanni was made.</p> <p>4. Registered Medical Items – Ministry of Health stated that a list of registered medicines which could be imported in to Sri Lanka is available. Agencies dealing in medicine could obtain list to check on approved drugs prior to import.</p>	CHA

2.	<p>Update on the NGO Act</p> <p>Jeevan provided an update on the NGO Act.</p>	
3	<p>NGO Taxation update</p> <p>Jeevan provided an update on NGO taxation. As we have been at discussions with the Ministry of Finance since April, 2007 and Department of Inland Revenue recently regarding Taxation on Incoming Funds of NGOs. We now have a formal response. CHA wish to reflect on developments in relation to taxation, the solutions, options and the way forward. CHA would like to invite you who are involved in handling taxation for a comprehensive discussion at CHA meeting Room on Thursday 12th June at 9 am</p>	
4	<p>Programme Area - 1 Services</p> <p>The list of services in Coordination, Facilitation and Networking (Programme Area 1) was explained by Jeevan.</p> <p>Presentation on Halo Trust activities in Jaffna – Calvin Ruysen- Operations Manager – Halo Trust</p> <p>Highlights;</p> <p>The HALO Trust is a non-political, non-religious NGO, registered in Britain as a charity (no.1001813 and SCO37870) and in the United States as a 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit organisation.</p> <p>HALO specialises in the removal of the debris of war. HALO has 7,000 mineclearers in 9 countries, with on-going surveys into new regions.</p> <p>HALO’s operations are grouped under Central Asia, South East Asia, Horn of Africa, Southern Africa and the Caucasus & Balkans. Our innovative training of local management and introduction of new equipment allows us to continue expansion as funding becomes available.</p> <p>On 19th June 2002, HALO celebrated clearing its first million landmines and other unexploded ordnance (UXO), a testament to the dedication of our staff, the generosity of our donors and the number of lives that have been saved.</p> <p>By late 2007 the total figure had almost reached 10,000,000 items.</p> <p>HALO’s programme is concentrated in Jaffna where the</p>	<p>HALO TRUST</p>

emphasis has been on clearance to resettle those displaced by conflict and the tsunami.

The population density in Jaffna is such that virtually all the mine-belts were impacting on the civilian population. HALO, working with the Government on prioritisation, has focussed its assets on these belts where the majority of civilian accidents were taking place.

Since the resumption of the war the A9 road linking Jaffna Peninsula to the mainland has been sealed and the supply of goods has slowed to a trickle. In this environment there is significant pressure on the land in order to grow food. In 2002 HALO completed a survey of all government controlled areas, accurately identifying the exact boundaries of dangerous areas, gathering both socio-economic data and technical data to assist in clearance, and prioritising the sites by humanitarian requirement.

On the Jaffna Peninsula HALO has trained hundreds of local Tamil staff to conduct demining supervised by a small team of experienced expatriates. The deminers are split into seven-man manual sections and are supported by two mechanical vegetation cutters.

In addition there has been a requirement to clear technically difficult minefields such as those found in Jaffna town, where defensive-works built from rubble have been seeded with mines. It was beyond the capability of the existing national assets to clear such rubble, and HALO deployed 13 armoured mechanical clearance units supported by armoured tipper trucks and a specially modified rock-crusher to process the spoil (a technique pioneered in the ruins of Kabul city in the mid-1990s). HALO utilises a specially adapted timber-shredder to destroy effectively and efficiently the anti-personnel mines as they are removed (negating the need for excess quantities of explosive in a volatile security environment).

HALO Sri Lanka has 360 local staff working in Jaffna Division. This emergency intervention has made rapid progress in reducing the size of the problem. A further full year of clearance, with deminer numbers maintained as they are, should see the last remaining mine concentrations removed, thus fulfilling the Government of Sri Lanka's wish for a mine impact free Jaffna by the end of 2009.

(More information could be found in the presentation)