

Post visit report of the interagency (SURIN) mission to Buner

Mission Objective

On 3rd August 09, a 7 member interagency UN mission visited Dagar and Sultanwas in District Buner. The purpose of the visit was to see the situation on the ground, meet and exchange views with the District Administration as well as the affected communities to fine tune the recovery assistance the subject agencies have undertaken to provide to the affected communities in Sultanwas.

The Journey

Six of the mission members from WHO, UNDP, WFP and the RC Office left Islamabad at 0700 hrs in two UN vehicles while the member from Habitat coming from Peshawar in a separate vehicle joined at Rashakai interchange. The 3 vehicle convoy was then escorted by civil police to the district headquarters in Dagar. From there, a separate escort was provided for the onward journey to Sultanwas. Except for traffic jam in Baghdada area of Mardan and certain portion of the road between Rustam and Ambela which was in serious disrepair, the journey was smooth and uninterrupted. The total journey from Islamabad to Dagar is around four hours.

The Roadside View

Traffic from and to Buner area showed a normalcy of sorts. The occasional roadside buildings of marble factories, Gas stations etc did show marks of heavy firefights but on the whole buildings and infrastructure seemed to have escaped damage except in Sultanwas hereinafter described in detail. There was no sign of livestock in the vicinity of the main road. The roadside hotels were open and apparently in business. The Sowari Baazar near Dagar was abuzz with life giving no evidence of the deserted state it is reported to have been in until recently.

Meeting with DCO

According to the schedule, the mission met the District Coordination Officer (DCO) Buner Mr. Yahya Akunzada. His Assistant Coordination Officer (ACO) and the Executive District Officer (EDO) Health were also present. The DCO welcomed the team and described the overall situation. He said the Situation in the district has come to normal with the return of 99% IDPs. He highlighted the pioneering role of WFP, UNDSS and UN Habitat in food distribution among IDPs, security facilitation of UN missions and community organization respectively.

Briefing by the DCO (photo by Jan Brouwer, WHO)



He informed about an IDP camp established in Sowari for the newly displaced people of four Union Councils in Cahgharzai area which is the current flashpoint for the Military offensive. He said the total number of registered IDPs was increasing by an average of 80 families and the population which now stands at 650 families is expected to reach 2000. He appreciated the

UNICEF initiatives to provide WASH facilities and requested its expeditious completion. He requested WHO to assist in health sector needs. The DCO also requested that UNHCR should kindly assist in the camp management. He further informed that the provincial government was presently providing all the support including tents. Regarding the food, he said that the provincial government has provided weekly ration (wheat flour, 20 kg; oil, sugar; rice and pulses 5 kg each) and requested WFP for the provision of monthly food ration to these IDPs on urgent basis.

Top priorities of the district government:

- Support and provision of facilities to newly arriving IDPs in Swarai Camp..
- Support in Education: Rehabilitation and Operationalization of damaged schools/alternate arrangements for schools/colleges which have been occupied by military or were damaged in operation.
- Provision of equipment/medicine and other facilities to make health services functional.
- Support to DCO office/district management in provision of technical staff and office equipment.
- Provision of solar energy facility as power supply is deficient and generators will require operational cost.

Immediate response by the Team

- WHO agreed to provide necessary support to health department.

- UNDP said they will provide technical staff with computers and printers.
- WFP will consider provision of food to the newly displaced families.
- Request for expeditious completion of wash facilities and assistance in camp management will be communicated to the UNICEF and UNHCR respectively.

Office and accommodation facilities in Buner:

There is scarcity of accommodation in Buner. Temporary arrangements have been made by the DCO office for the UN agencies and some other organizations. The doctor's hostel outside the DHQ Hospital premises where the DCO had offered 14 rooms for UN's use on temporary basis is not recommended by DSS for security reasons.

For offices, space has been allocated in the DCO compound. This site is security wise appropriate and spacious. The team is of the view that some combined office facility is essential for use by the participating agencies project staff as well as missions. DCO suggested container based office setup.

Visit to Sultanwas and meeting with JIRGA:

The mission visited Sultanwas and was received by the JIRGA members. The village or whatever remains of it portrays a very good example of why early recovery interventions are crucial and urgently required in the post disaster and Post conflict situation. The overwhelming picture is that of a destitute population haplessly sitting on the ruins of their houses with no means to undertake the gigantic recovery job lying ahead.



All they have is hope and the will to come out of this semi shock situation. The JIRGA with 23 members has a managing committee and is representative of the entire population. The meeting was held in a mosque which has become the usual meeting place for the JIRGA. The JIRGA was informed about the purpose of the visit and the salient features of the UN joint intervention underling the participatory mode of

implementation and how their support would be crucial.



Glimpse of destroyed houses and anemic rubble removal endeavor (photo by Janbrouwer, WHO)

The president of the executive committee Mr Mutabar Khan and the General Secretary Mr Riaz welcomed the team, appreciated the Joint initiative and promised full support in its implementation. They expressed their gratitude for the positive role by Habitat in making them agree on formulation and structure of this representative body. Regarding the overall situation the president said that:

- Almost 99% population has returned to the village.
- Estimated number of households is 600 while the surrounding neighborhood has about 1200 households. Families are constrained to perilously live in damaged houses
- 75 % wheat crop was destroyed while cultivation of maize crops could not be done due to displacement of families and Ban on cultivation by the govt. Families have also consumed the seed stocks of maize and wheat.
- There is no medical facility in the vicinity, the BHU being located in Pir Baba area and inaccessible due to security constraints.
- Majority of the returnees are not registered and hence technically not eligible for food provision.
- People have started work on the rubble removal but lack of food security and lack of resources is coming in their way.
- There is need for food and other support centres close to the village for security reasons.

Highlights of the discussion and action points

- Jirga members to make a list of registered (with WFP food card) and non-registered families to avoid provision of double ration.

Immediate

- WFP will provide support to community through its food for work activities. Individuals participating in rehabilitation work such as debris removal, streets and footpaths repairs as well as training in construction skills will be provided food in partnership with UN habitat and UNDP.

As soon as the work starts

(Families which are registered and receiving WFP monthly food ration will not be entitled under this program)

- Jirga's request to provide food distribution point closer to their village will be communicated to the sub office and country office for their consideration.

To be considered

- UN Habitat will start leveling and compaction of land for transitional shelter construction. Out of 250 planned shelters, 150 will be constructed in the initial phase.

Work will start on Aug 05, 09

- Jirga will provide list of the 20 labors that UN Habitat will pay Rs 300 per day, per person. WFP will give them food for work

Immediate

- UN Habitat will conduct meetings with the Jirga to get the data of Registered and Unregistered individuals and will provide it to WFP

Immediate

- WHO will arrange Mobile health teams on **5th of August-09**
- UNDP priority interventions will include cash for work, support to rebuilding restoration of community infrastructure, support to livelihoods through access to cash grants, skills training and water for agriculture and horticultural crops. It will establish social protection centers for vulnerable women and children and community based dispute resolution mechanism for social harmony and cohesion.

Initial activities will start in 1-2 Weeks

Stopover at the DHQ Hospital

On the way back the team visited the DHQ Hospital met the MS and examined the facilities at the CCU. The WHO team had discussion with the staff and noted the requirements.

Visit to the IDP Camp at Swarai

The team also visited the IDP Camp at Swarai. Currently there are 650 families residing in the camp. Tents and food is being provided by the government. Registration process is in the progress and every day around 60-80 families are registered.



A glimpse of IDP camp Swarai

Photo by Janbrouwer (WHO)

Follow Up

- Participating agencies should kindly arrange for initiation of the SURIN recovery support activities on the ground at their earliest.
- Support committed to the DCO should please be delivered preferably within a week.
- UN Habitat is requested to provide the proposed design of the UN office structure at DAGAR for the participating agencies' agreement and indication of required rooms.
- UNHCR and UNCEF are requested to kindly note the request of DCO Buner for camp management support and early completion of WATSAN facilities in IDP camp Swarai.

- Agencies are requested to coordinate with CERINA management for initial feed back from their assessment to further fine tune Sultanwas UN Rapid Intervention (SURIN) recovery activities.

Particulars of the Mission

Name	Agency
Mr. Anwar ul Haq	RC office
Dr Fawad Khan	WHO
Mr. Jan Gerrit Brouwer	WHO
Dr Alice Croisier	WHO
Mr. Farhan sabih	UNDP
Dr Khalida Malik	WFP
Mr. Majid Khan Afridi	UN Habitat