From: Karima Hessami <karima.hessami@undp.org>
To: ACBAR <acbaar@brain.net.pk>; ANCB, Sayed Faizullah Wahidi <wahidi@aghco.pwr.sdnpk.undp.org>; Bjorn Johannessen <noremb@comsats.net.pk>; Dag Dannfelt <embsw@comsats.net.pk>; ICC <iccppsh@brain.net.pk>; ICRC <islamabad.isl@icrc.org>; IOM <anakayama@iom.int>; Nancy Dupree <aric@brain.net.pk>; SWABAC <swabac@swb.qta.sdnpk.undp.org>; Switzerland <islamabad@sdc.net>; UNC <antonio@undpafg.org.pk>; UNHCR <faraha@unhcr.ch>; USA <husheklj@state.gov>; WFP <Michael.Sackett@wfp.org>; WFP <gvandijk@wfp.org>; WHO <wro@whoafg.org>; Abdul Salam Rahimy <asalam@brain.net.pk>; Ahmad Idress Rahmani <ircugp@netzone.net.pk>; <atmar@brain.net.pk>; <Austin@care.org>; Denise Brown <denise.brown@wfp.org>; Farooq Wardak <undcap@brain.net.pk>; <gender@brain.net.pk>; <habitat@worldtelmeca.net>; Hangama A

Sent: Monday, May 07, 2001 10:17 AM
Subject: Report of the mission of the Senior Inter-Agency network on Internal Displacement to Afghanistan

>From Norah Niland

Please find attached the report of the mission of the Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement to Afghanistan from 18 to 25 April 2001.

Regards
From: Karima Hessami <karima.hessami@undp.org>
To: Abdul Salam Rahimy <asalam@brain.net.pk>; Ahmad Idress Rahmani <ircugp@netzone.net.pk>; <antonio@undpafg.org.pk>; <atmar@brain.net.pk>; <Austin@care.org>; CCA <amir@pes.comsats.net.pk>; Denise Brown <denise.brown@wfp.org>; Farooq Wardak <uncdap@brain.net.pk>; <gender@brain.net.pk>; <habitat@worldtelmeca.net>; Hangama Anwari <ircfdo@apollo.net.pk>; Katharina Lumpp <lumpp@unhcr.ch>; Kawun Kakar <kkakar@undpafg.org.pk>; Lars Gill <larsgill@brain.net.pk>; Lisa Lundgren <radda@brain.net.pk>; Najibullah Akrami <Afgdevas@brain.net.pk>; <npourzand@unicef.org>; <petercol@brain.net.pk>; Sabrina Kassam-Jan <sabrina@undpafg.org.pk>; Samantha Reynolds <samantha@afgh.sdnpk.undp.org>; <Worsley@care.org>; ANCB, Sayed Faizullah Wahidi <wahidi@aghco.pwr.sdnpk.undp.org>; Dag Dannfelt <embsw@comsats.ne

Sent: Monday, May 07, 2001 10:33 AM
Attach: IDP-RepFinalApril01.doc
Subject: Correction: Report of the mission of the Senior Inter-Agency network on Internal Displacement to Afghanistan

>From Norah Niland

Please find attached the report of the mission of the Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement to Afghanistan from 18 to 25 April 2001.

Regards
Findings and Recommendations

Background

The Senior Inter-Agency Network on Internal Displacement, led by the UN Special Co-ordinator on Internal Displacement, together with representatives of FAO, UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO and the NGO community, undertook a mission to Afghanistan from 18 to 25 April, 2001. The main objectives of the Mission were to: assess the nature and magnitude of the crisis affecting internally displaced populations and related vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, including those at risk of being displaced; to review the operational capacity of UN agencies and other humanitarian actors on the ground to respond to such needs, with a view to identifying any gaps in the humanitarian response; to review existing institutional arrangements within and between the UN agencies, the Red Cross Movement, NGOs and the authorities, and to make recommendations to concerned agencies, organisations and the authorities for future action.

The Mission met with local and government authorities, representatives of United Nations, the Red Cross Movement, other international organizations, and non-governmental organisations, and members of the diplomatic community, both in Islamabad and in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, the Mission visited Kabul, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, Baghlan and Sheberghdan provinces. Due to logistical constraints the Mission was unable to visit the territories under the control of the Northern Alliance.

Overview of the situation

In Afghanistan, over 20 years conflict have caused several bouts of displacement. In 2000, the country was hit by the worst drought it has suffered in living memory which caused further movement of populations. Since the summer of 2000, up to 700,000 Afghans are estimated to have left their homes because of conflict and drought. Most of them are internally displaced inside Afghanistan. Some 170,000 have crossed into Pakistan and over 100,000 to Iran. Following the Taliban offensive of 1999, over 100,000 IDPs are still present in the Panshir Valley and in Kabul. It is estimated that over half of the population of Kabul is made up of displaced persons.

Population displacement is continuing in many regions of Afghanistan. In Herat, the estimated daily influx of population is between 1,000 and 1,500 people. Population movements are also reported in the northern and eastern regions of the country. Given the continuation of the severe drought conditions and the expected intensification of the conflict, displacement of populations is likely to continue in the coming months. As neighbouring countries continue to restrict access to Afghan asylum seekers, it is likely that most of the displaced will remain in Afghanistan as IDPs. Given the drought and conflict situation, a voluntary large scale return of populations is not likely to take place in the immediate future.

The overall condition of the population in Afghanistan is one of the poorest in the world. While IDPs undoubtedly are living in extremely precarious situations, some of the local population is equally or worse off. Conditions of displaced populations in Afghanistan vary widely. While some IDPs are residing with host communities, others have sought shelter in public buildings or semi-destroyed infrastructures or are living in the open. Up to 200,000 IDPs are living in camps that are either set up by the international community or are spontaneously created by the IDPs. In most cases, some food support is provided to such IDPs, but living conditions are seriously overcrowded, sanitation is minimal and risk of deteriorating health is high.

The effects of the drought have severely aggravated the already limited capacity of the host population to feed and accommodate IDPs. Moreover, populations who remain in drought-stricken
areas are often more vulnerable than the displaced and some reportedly remain behind as they lack the resources to pay for transportation to leave.

The combined effect of drought, the deteriorating economic condition and other factors means that the authorities, even if they wished to do so, are unable to support this population and promote their recovery without the support of the international community.

Notwithstanding the sizeable efforts of the international aid community to respond to the current crisis, the magnitude of the needs and the extremely difficult operating environment result in serious gaps in the provision of assistance. The predicament of the displaced is compounded by the overall deterioration of economic and social conditions in the country and the lack of a long-term food security strategy. It is estimated that only a quarter of the total population has access to safe water and 10% to adequate sanitation. The health system is virtually non-existent. Access to education in Afghanistan and the quality of education available remain poor at all levels and extremely limited for females. The literacy rate is around 25%.

The overall human rights situation in Afghanistan remains dire. Both Taliban and anti-Taliban forces have been reportedly responsible for gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. In Taliban areas, numerous oppressive laws have been imposed, including some of the most repressive measures on the rights of women in the world.

The Taliban’s ban on the cultivation of poppy seems to have been effective, and as this represented an important means of income for a large part of the population, it has placed an added burden on livelihoods, likely leading to displacement. The lack of international recognition for what has been achieved, including through donor support for alternative cultivation programmes, has clearly had a negative impact and possibly even threatens the maintenance of the ban.

Implementation
Notwithstanding the efforts of many agencies and some donors, the current capacity of the international community to respond to the displacement crisis is insufficient. This is due to a series of constraints, including the lack of adequate financial support, insufficient staffing levels, lack of implementing partner capacity, restrictive practices on the part of the authorities, and serious security constraints.

Concern over the lack of agency or local implementation capacity on the ground to respond to the needs of the displaced in a timely and effective manner was expressed by many interlocutors. A number of UN agencies reported difficulties in discharging their programmes due to the lack of reliable implementing actors, particularly NGOs, on the ground. It was also noted that this needed to be complemented by a strengthening of the resource and management base of the UN agencies in Afghanistan. The need to step up capacity is even more critical in light of the most-likely scenario of continued drought and increased fighting, leading to an upsurge in population movement. Given this prevailing scenario, the aid community needs to ensure that contingency planning mechanisms and effective rapid response capacities are in place.

Proposals:
- UN agencies and NGOs to strengthen their capacity, including in particular in terms of presence on the ground, to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of assistance. UN agencies are encouraged to post, on a more permanent basis, senior managers in Afghanistan.
- UNDSO and UNSECOORD to review the security arrangements in place in order to allow strengthening of UN presence in Afghanistan.
- Donors and UN agencies to support the expansion of operational NGOs by ensuring the provision of adequate resources, including for food delivery, in a timely manner and covering their initial costs of expansion.
- International NGOs to reinforce their activities aimed at strengthening capacities of appropriate national NGOs.
• Donors to provide support for an increased implementation capacity of agencies on the ground.
• Afghan authorities to be pressed to provide a more favourable environment for agencies to operate.
• UN and others to emphasise the authorities’ responsibility for the well-being of their civilian population.

Co-ordination
Humanitarian co-ordination in Afghanistan is led by the UN Coordinator for Afghanistan (UNCO), based in Islamabad. Regional Co-ordinators (RCO’s), present in six regional centres in Afghanistan, are responsible for coordination on the ground. The Mission noted the serious efforts undertaken by the RCOs to effectively bring together the various agency actors and NGOs to implement their activities in a spirit of collaboration and information sharing. However, it was noted, that in most cases RCOs were understaffed and under resourced. Coordination activities received only 18% of the requested funds for the year 2000, while to date less than 5% of the 2001 requirements have been met.

The RCO system should be further strengthened: RCOs should assume clear responsibility for facilitating dialogue between the humanitarian actors and authorities. RCOs should also be responsible for developing emergency response and contingency plans as well as sustaining a dialogue with agencies engaged in rehabilitation and development activities to ensure that appropriate foundations for recovery are being laid.

Proposals:
• UNCO to strengthen overall co-ordination structures in Afghanistan, including in particular to review and strengthen the RCO organisational structure in terms of staffing, resources and authority and providing senior managerial capacity in Afghanistan with adequate support.
• Donors to provide increased resources to UNCO in order to strengthen its presence and activities.

Response strategy
The crisis in Afghanistan has severely affected all sectors of the population. Accordingly, the humanitarian response needs to be directed to the displaced population and the host population, who often bear the burden of the displacement, as well as to populations in their places of origin, in order to pre-empt future involuntary displacement.

There is a general consensus that Afghanistan is in a humanitarian crisis situation and consequently the response must focus immediately upon relief interventions. At the same time, as outlined in the response strategy prepared in May 2000 by the assistance community working on Afghanistan, it is vital that this response goes beyond the provision of emergency assistance: there is a critical need to direct interventions at saving livelihoods and supporting sustainable coping mechanisms, including through the provision of income generating activities and agricultural support. This approach will need increased donor support: only 12% of the US$50.9m for “empowerment for sustainable livelihoods” requested in the Afghanistan Appeal has been pledged to date.

In order to better target the provision of assistance to the displaced populations and related vulnerable populations, as well as to develop contingency planning and durable solutions, there is a need to analyse the causes and nature of displacement, whether it is conflict or drought driven. The mission was informed of a number of initiatives taken in this regard, including a joint WFP-UNHCR-IOM-UNOCHA survey and an IFRC/ICRC assessment.

Many villages appear already to be depopulating in the drought affected areas, especially in the rainfed farmlands where complete crop failure is expected. A large number of communities have already liquidated their assets and have been forced to sell their livestock at distress prices that can be as low as a quarter of normal prices. Prices are now increasing across the country signaling the complete depletion of herds of the poor and small farmers. At the same time key essential commodity prices
have increased substantially. There is virtually no employment in towns and little is expected for the forthcoming harvest season, in view of lack of resources to pay for it.

**Proposals:**
- Assistance agencies to continue to target vulnerable populations in a comprehensive manner, addressing special needs of IDPs as well as stabilising other vulnerable populations, in order to pre-empt further involuntary displacement;
- Assistance agencies to continue to seek ways to strengthen local coping mechanisms and promote recovery through longer-term support. UNDP to take the lead in undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the potential for small-scale alternative livelihood support interventions, targeting existing and potential areas of IDP displacement.
- UNDP to ensure linkages between the P.E.A.C.E. II initiative and ongoing activities for IDPs especially as these relate to agricultural rehabilitation, shelter initiatives and support for alternative livelihoods.
- Donors to provide support in a flexible manner to meet urgent and unforeseen needs as well as to provide support for longer term initiatives aimed at stabilising population in their places of origin.

**Protection**
Violations or denial of rights are a root cause of displacement and related vulnerability. As highlighted in recent reports, including by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan, both sides have reportedly committed serious violations of international humanitarian law, including aerial bombings, rocketing and other artillery attacks on civilian population areas, indiscriminate use of landmines, reprisal killings and summary executions. Violations go largely unpunished, as there is an almost total lack of accountability on the part of the authorities. This impunity is compounded by the lack of systematic monitoring and collection of information on violations and abuses in Afghanistan.

The Mission was concerned by the overall lack of attention on the part of humanitarian actors to protection issues which were considered secondary to the more pressing assistance needs. Although the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement have been translated into local languages, the Mission noted there was little awareness of the Principles on the ground. Concern was also expressed for the lack of donor support to protection and human rights programmes (the combined request of NGOs and the UN in 2000 for funding for human rights work was only covered for 0.5%).

The UN Coordinator is supported by a Human Rights Adviser whose function is underfunded and understaffed. In the framework of the UN Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA), a number of Civil Affairs Officer are currently working in Afghanistan. The Mission noted the need for improved collaboration and information sharing mechanisms between UNSMA and other humanitarian actors. UNHCR has also a considerable capacity with regard to protection, but so far the focus of its activities has been on returning populations.

**Proposals:**
- UNCO, possibly through the Emergency Task Force, to ensure the development of a comprehensive protection strategy for displaced population in Afghanistan, aimed at ensuring effective monitoring capacity on the ground.
- UNCO to continue to undertake advocacy with authorities for safe and unrestricted access of humanitarian agencies to all populations in need.
- UNHCR to strengthen its activities on the ground to monitor population movements throughout Afghanistan, including displaced persons. Other relevant agencies to continue to monitor conditions of displaced populations within the purview of their programmes.
- UNCO and UNSMA to strengthen collaboration and information-sharing mechanisms.
- UNCO and humanitarian agencies to strengthen the dissemination and implementation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.
- Humanitarian agencies, including in particular NGOs, to strengthen their awareness of and support for a rights-based approach, ensuring it is translated into rights-based programming.
• OHCHR to identify dedicated resources to support the work of the HR Adviser in this regard.
• Donors to support efforts to strengthen monitoring and protection activities, including staffing of UNHCR and of the office of the HR Adviser.

Women and children
The condition of women in Afghanistan is dramatic. The Taliban have pursued a policy of marginalisation of women and girls, including by placing a ban on education, prohibiting women from working outside the house and restricting their freedom of movement. However, the application of such restrictions has been inconsistent, allowing the humanitarian community to devise various entry points to reach some women and girls in need.

Proposals:
• Humanitarian agencies to increase their presence in the field to reinforce mechanisms to better reach female populations and respond to their needs. Agencies to continue advocating with the authorities for the rights of women and girls and ensuring that protection and promotion of such rights are incorporated into their programming.
• UNCO and UNICEF to undertake an assessment of the impact of displacement on women and children, comparing inter-alia the status of health (mental and physical) and coping mechanisms between those displaced and the local population.
• UNICEF to strengthen child protection programmes, including for psycho-social rehabilitation, using this as an entry point for longer-term education.

Food aid and Food Security
Some 85% of the total population of Afghanistan is estimated to depend on agriculture for its livelihood. In 2000, Afghanistan was hit by the worst drought the country has suffered in the last 30 years, forcing large numbers of people to leave. WFP provides food assistance for over 3 million people, the majority of which are not internally displaced. WFP estimates that over one million people will face an unbridgeable food security gap in the next three to four months, before the next harvest. As many farmers, including most IDPs have been unable to cultivate their lands, it is expected that they will depend on assistance at least through the following harvest in mid-2002. As more information is known about this year’s harvest the need for accelerating the present food aid assistance is becoming apparent. Life saving aid must be increased and continued for at least the next sixteen months. Continued donor support will be critical.

Beyond the provision of food, there is a need to develop a national longer term food security strategy, ensuring the provision of basic agricultural inputs, in particular seeds and tools, in a timely manner to restart planting and avoid further dependency. Efforts in this regard are already being undertaken by the Food Security Group. FAO, subject to adequate resources, envisages undertaking a crop and livestock programme with a sustainable livelihoods approach and with a capacity for national impact in order to create food security by 2006. Priorities under this programme would include: rehabilitation of irrigation systems; seed selection, multiplication of improved seed varieties and supply of fertilisers; development of a farmers extension system, livestock and animal health as well as various income generating activities associated with these main activities. In this framework, FAO has issued an urgent appeal for US$7m for the immediate procurement of over 20,000MT of high quality seed during the 2001 harvest.

Proposals:
• WFP and other relevant agencies to ensure continued food provision to both displaced and host populations as well as to vulnerable populations in situ [WFP to increase provision of food needs through the NGOs];
• FAO, and other relevant agencies, to undertake the provision of agricultural support in a timely and effective manner;
• Donors to ensure increased support for emergency food needs as well as immediate funds for the provision of agricultural support for vulnerable populations, including support for a long term food security strategy.
Shelter
The provision of shelter for the displaced remains seriously inadequate. The Mission witnessed the dire living conditions of IDPs, including some living in holes in the ground. In Kabul over 20,000 displaced people have been housed in the semi-destroyed buildings of an ex-Soviet compound for close to two years. In Herat over 130,000 IDPs have been settled in camps, however due to the shortage of shelters up to three families are being housed in each tent. Moreover, as the influx of population has outstripped the shelter capacity, incoming families are forced to sleep in the open without any shelter. In the northern provinces most of the 240,000 IDPs are housed in abandoned buildings and makeshift sites. All require assistance for improved shelter.

Proposals:
- Humanitarian agencies to make the provision of adequate shelter for the displaced needs an absolute priority. UNCO, UNDP and Habitat to undertake an expert needs assessment mission urgently to review the mid-term shelter needs of the displaced.
- Habitat to be requested and funded to assume a focal point role for addressing shelter needs of displaced populations.
- Donors to provide urgent support to humanitarian appeals for the provision of immediate shelter to displaced populations, including in particular for the provision of 10,000 tents and 10,000 housing units in Herat, (at an estimated cost of up to US$2m). Similar needs, including 10,000 tents on an emergency basis, exist in the northern provinces and should be properly assessed.

Education
The provision of education to all Afghans continues to be a main challenge, including in light of the restrictions posed by the Taliban. Fortunately, in a number of cases, the humanitarian community has been able to find various informal arrangements to ensure the provision of education to all children. There is a need, however, to strengthen the provision of education in IDP camps and settlements.

Proposals:
- Humanitarian agencies to strengthen efforts for informal arrangements to ensure the provision of education to girls, while continuing to advocate firmly with the authorities the right to education for all
- UNICEF to actively lead efforts for the provision of education in IDP camps, while continuing to pursue the establishment of educational opportunities in places of origin, both to prevent displacement and encourage return.

Health and Water and Sanitation
Health and sanitation conditions for displaced populations remain dire. WHO reported that the infant mortality has reached risk levels in some areas. In Maslakh camp in Herat there are only three health centres for a population of over 90,000, with an estimated shortfall of over 2,000 latrines. Overcrowding in IDP settlements and the ensuing poor water and sanitation conditions have resulted in a surge of diarrhoeal and skin diseases, acute respiratory infection and risk of meningitis.

Proposals:
- UN agencies, (WHO and UNICEF in particular), and NGOs to strengthen the provision of health services to displaced populations, aiming at the standard of one clinic/10,000 people. Health capacity for IDP communities should also be increased through mobile clinics. Maternal health services as well as the provision of health education programmes to be supported. Improved vaccination should be provided through better logistics, staffing and appropriate training.
- UNICEF and WHO to increase their presence on the ground, including to ensure full coverage during national immunizations days (NIDs) in Herat, Mazar and Kabul.
- Agencies to continue to look for informal solutions to ensure the provision of health services to all, while continuing to advocate for the rights of all to basic services.
- UNICEF and other relevant agencies to ensure water and sanitation conditions in IDP settlements, including to stem the upsurge of water related diseases.
Donors to support health and water and sanitation programmes as outlined in the 2001 Appeal as well as new emergency needs arising from continuing crisis.

Landmines
Afghanistan is one of the countries most affected by landmines and UXOs in the world, there an estimated 750 square kilometres of mined territory, affecting in particular IDP locations. Limited data available indicates that casualties may be as high as 150 to 300 per month. Children make up one third of the civilian casualties. In late 1998 the Taliban announced a ban on the use of landmines by their forces. The Northern Alliance is yet to announce a similar ban.

The implications of mine action, including mine awareness activities, is key to promoting safe areas for IDP settlements and for return. The Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA), run out of UNOCHA in collaboration with a number of NGOs, commenced operations in 1989. Activities of MAPA include mine area survey, clearance and mine awareness. Despite positive reports of this operation, MAPA continues to be severely underfunded. In 2000, only US$14.7m were pledged of the required US$ 25.5m for this programme, despite its high reputation for effectiveness. The shortfall in funding for MAPA activities in 2000 resulted in achieving only 64% of clearance targets for the year. Currently only $6.5m of the $20m needs have been pledged for 2001.

Proposals:
- Relevant agencies, including UNICEF, to increase attention to mine awareness activities.
- Donors to more actively support mine action activities.

Funding
The humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan remains seriously underfunded. The 2000 Appeal for Afghanistan had a shortfall of nearly 50%. In November 2000, the 2001 Appeal for Afghanistan was launched requesting a total of US$229m. This was later revised to around US$250m to include new priority needs resulting from the current crisis. As of 20 April 2001, only US$37.9m (15% of requirements) had been pledged. The mid-term review of the Appeal will reflect increased needs, including WFP’s new EMOP as well as requirements to meet the needs of Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

Proposals:
- Donors to provide necessary support for humanitarian activities as outlined in the Afghanistan Appeal for 2001. Such support should encompass coordination, protection, health, education, mine action and food security.
- Donors to apply longer term funding mechanisms to address chronic and ongoing emergencies as well as ensure support for the longer term needs to allow longer term recovery programmes.
- UNCO to ensure that the mid-term review of the Appeal outlines more clearly the needs of the displaced and strategies being put in place to address the issue.