

Meeting with NGOs on ‘Temporary Shelter’

A meeting on ‘Temporary Shelter’ was organized by the district collector at the mini-conference hall of the district collectorate on 12th April 2005. The meeting was attended by over 20 NGOs who were involved in the construction of temporary shelter in Nagapattinam district and representatives from NCRC and government department. (Participants list attached). The district collector attended the meeting and made his suggestions to the NGOs regarding the various issues pertaining to the construction of temporary shelter

Purpose of the meeting

- To discuss and **share experiences, innovations and best practices** to tackle the prevailing emergency situation in temporary shelters due to heavy rain
- To request NGOs to undertake a **quick assessment of temporary shelter situation using a Checklist** (annex-1) and propose to collector any measure that needs to be taken beyond the capacity of the NGOs to address.

Announcements

- The district collector **announced the start of One2One meetings** with NGOs for **permanent shelter construction**. He went through the schedules drawn up covering ? NGOs across ? days, starting April 13, 2005. HOPE-Calcutta, DWCDS and CARE India requested their name to be included, which was agreed provided they submitted the proposals by April 15, 2005 (annexure 2) – the Schedule of Meetings).

Main issues discussed and clarified

- The collector shared his experiences from recent visits to the temporary shelters particularly the people sentiments, quality of construction of temporary shelters, the impact of recent heavy rain and some innovations/best practices by NGOs and community to tackle the situation
- Some of the **innovations/best practices** to prevent from rain water entry he quoted were
 - A layer of brick wall at floor level which prevented flooding of shelters
 - Filling the gaps with mud
 - Laying thatched roof in between rows of houses

- He also requested the NGOs (having capacity) to do some emergency relief activities in temporary shelters like
 - o Supply of dry rations to the needy
 - o Need based support for the affected community (Tarpaulins, infra etc)
 - o Relocation of toilets, bathrooms and hand pumps given the flooding and sanitary conditions.
 - o Filling up ditches created in the process...
- He also requested the NGOs to be careful in laying thatched roof, and suggested to educate the people on precautionary measures
- He requested NGOs not to undertake construction of new temporary shelters without informing the Government.
- He appealed to the NGOs to **stop supply of things like chairs, tables etc** which may prevent them doing their regular business
- He explained in detail the **checklist developed for assessing situation in temporary shelter**, its purpose and provided clarifications on doubts raised by the participants. Health component has been added to the checklist based on the feedback by an NGO.
- Some of the NGOs reported that **drinking water and electricity facilities** were not done in places where they have constructed temporary shelters. He directed the Additional Collector and other concerned officials to address this on a priority basis and **not to discriminate between various temporary shelters** no matter who has executed them for its Govt. responsibility to provide for this facilities.
- The collector appealed to the NGOs to convince people since most of them who have got pucca houses even without any damage applied for new houses. He also explained the practical **difficulties in land acquisition**.
- He reiterated that **allotment of permanent shelter constructions for NGOs is not based on those who have taken up temporary shelter constructions**. He also told that the NGOs can meet him/his rep at time to discuss on specific issues apart from the regular one-one meet.
- In conclusion he requested all the NGOs to collect information using the **checklist and submit them to Deputy Collector (LA) Mr. Raman** by the evening of 13th April as he has to present the findings to the government for funding request. He added that it is the part of NGOs to bring the important issues pertaining to the situation in temporary shelters for any necessary action by the government
- Finally he thanked the NGOs for their continued support and cooperation and stressed the point that given the experience of flooding of temporary shelters **Habitat Planning** taking into consideration living conditions, drainage, service provision, community infrastructure and livelihood realities is essential for Permanent Shelter.