

## Lebanon Crisis

### Health Cluster Bulletin # 17

Friday 11 May 2007

*The Lebanon Crisis Health Cluster Bulletin aims to give an overview of the health activities conducted by the health cluster partners in the areas affected by the latest conflict in Lebanon. It compiles health information received from the different organizations working in Beirut, South Lebanon, South Beirut, and the Bekaa valley.*

*The Health Cluster Bulletin will be issued on a monthly basis.*



Picture: UNFPA

*Lebanese Army attending an awareness session on HIV/AIDS conducted by LFPA and UNFPA in the South.*

May 2007

#### Highlights

- No outbreak alerts were reported to the Early Warning and Response Surveillance system (EWARS).
- No additional injuries and deaths due to Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs), cluster bombs and mines were reported.
- Capacity development trainings on health related issues as part of the recovery and preparedness are on going.

#### Situation Overview

- According to the National Demining Office (NDO) and UNDP Mine action, no new casualties were registered during the past month maintaining the total number of military and civilian casualty figures due to landmines/UXOs/cluster bombs to 233 divided as follows: 191 injured civilians, 21 killed civilians and 21 military casualties as of May 10, 2007. The stability in the figures is thought to be owing to the awareness campaigns undertaken at the community level in the affected areas, as well as the demining efforts in the populated areas undertaken by the mine action community.

#### Health Response to the Humanitarian Crisis

National and international Health Cluster partners are providing support in four core areas:

##### 1. Assessment and monitoring

- The Faculty of Health Sciences at the American University of Beirut (FHS-AUB) supported by UNFPA conducted a study on the effect of displacement during the war on pregnant women and women in the post partum period. The study reached 1147 women from the various areas in Beirut southern suburbs and the South. Findings of the study suggest that the lack of basic needs, inaccessibility to hospitals, and the absence or limited medical care and hygiene services during the displacement resulted in an increasing number of miscarriages.
- The Institute for Development, Research, Advocacy, and applied Care (IDRAAC) supported by UNFPA conducted a rapid assessment of mental health and

psychological needs of affected women and youth in Beirut southern suburbs, Tyr, Nabatiyeh, and Bent Jbeil. Focus group discussions with 120 women showed an increase in the prevalence of various mental health conditions in the aftermath of the war.

- Partners for Development (PfD) Institute supported by UNFPA conducted a post war psychosocial and health needs assessment in the caza of Nabatiyeh. The study consisted of interviews with 210 families from 41 villages, interviews with health care providers and policy makers, and 7 focus groups in socio-medical centers. Findings show the need for increased psychosocial programs and health services, as well as awareness raising in the area.
- The Lebanese Family Planning Association (LFPA) supported by UNFPA conducted awareness raising sessions on HIV/AIDS among 4368 Lebanese Army soldiers in the South, and trained a core team of 16 army officers.
- KAFA (Enough Violence and Exploitation) supported by UNFPA conducted discussion groups, drama therapy, and awareness and counselling sessions aiming to reduce the risk of post conflict violence among women and young girls. A total of 23 women, 19 young girls, and 25 men from Beirut southern suburbs were reached. Findings are posted on [www.unfpa.org.lb](http://www.unfpa.org.lb)
- The Saint Joseph University has released the "USJ-Qana Twinning First Activity Report: an Intervention for Health and Human Development" to its stakeholders, presenting a rapid appraisal about the interventions implemented in Qana during the period of September 2006 until March 2007. The report covered the five components of the intervention: family health, school physical and mental health, reproductive services and women's health, educational programs in kindergartens and schools, and rehabilitation of persons with special needs.
- The Faculty of Health Sciences-University of Balamand (FHS-UoB) presented the findings of the study "Community-based Assessment of the well-being of Elderly in Lebanon" supported by WHO and targeting the elderly community in Nabatiyeh during the war. The main conclusion drawn is the need to address the physical and psychosocial wellbeing in a more appropriate and adapted way.

## 2. Health coordination

- The Health cluster meeting is being held biweekly on Tuesdays at 15:00, WHO office within the Ministry of Public Health office in Tyr. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday May 22.
- The Mental Health and Psychosocial Support sub-cluster coordination meeting is held once per month. The next meeting will take place on Monday May 28 at 12:00, WHO office-Tyr.
- The Health Cluster and Mental Health Matrices are regularly updated and shared with partners.
- The United Nations Resident Coordinator Office (UNRCO) renovated the UN System in Lebanon website in the aim of enhancing coordination among partners in recovery as well as accessibility to information. The website [www.un.org.lb](http://www.un.org.lb) now includes minutes of general coordination meetings and sector working groups meetings, NGO matrix, GIS maps, progress reports, assessment reports, as well as links to key partners' websites.

## 3. Filling health gaps

- The Saint Joseph University team of doctors and nurses has concluded its medical visits this week in Seddikine, therefore covering around 3,500 children in Qana, Aiteet, Al-Bayyad, Hanawaii, and Seddikine.
- Developmental Action without Borders (Nabaa) and in partnership with Save the Children Sweden is implementing child friendly environment programs in 10 schools in Deir Kanoun El Nahr, Tar Harfa, Majdel Zoun, El Mansouri, Naqura, Masaken, Burj Shemaly, El Bass, Ismaïye, and Hanawaii.

- Nabaa and in partnership with Save the Children UK is conducting inclusive educational programs on child rights in 12 public schools in the South in Seddikine, Zebbine, Burghuliyye, Masaken, Maarake, Maaroub, Wadi Jilou, Bazouriyye, Jwayya, Toura, Tardebba, and Chahabiyye, and 2 public schools in the North in Bebnine and Mhammara, as well as 6 UNRWA schools. The educational programs have covered so far around 8,000 children between the ages of 9 and 14 years.
- The Khiam rehabilitation center received a donation of acute and chronic medications from an alliance of NGOs in Egypt, and has carried out their distribution to the municipalities, dispensaries, and partner NGOs in Harouf, Deir Kanoun, Aramta, and Burj Rahhal.
- Nabaa and in partnership with Terre Des Hommes Italy (TDH) and Save the Children Italy started the implementation of a project targeting 10 villages in the South: Majdal Zun, Al-Bayyad, Bareesh, Beflay, Toura, Ter Harfa, Al-Majadel, Daira, and Yarine. The project is implemented in two parts: provision of equipments to schools that have been damaged by the war, and undertaking environmental health interventions in the villages, through the participation and involvement of youth community teams.
- The Blue Mission Training Center for Community Development is providing training on conflict resolution for children between the ages of 11 and 18 years in 6 schools in Saida (4), Tyr (1), and the Bekaa (1) under its "Ambassadors of Peace" project, covering around 1,000 children during the recovery period.
- Al Rissalah Islamic Scout in partnership with the Faculty of Health Sciences-University of Balamand (FHS-UoB) is conducting health education sessions in 43 villages in Bent Jbeil, Marjeyoun, Nabatiyeh, and Tyr. The sessions have covered around 3,200 persons.
- The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), in partnership with WHO, UNICEF, and other relevant stakeholders have started the preparations for the national measles immunization that will take place in October 2007, targeting 1 million children between the ages of 9 months and 15 years. The preparations include the recruitment and training of vaccinators, the procurement of vaccines, the production of IEC material in addition to other activities.

#### **4. Preserving and supporting local health systems**

- WHO is resuming its trainings on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies targeting paramedical staff at the level of Primary health care centers. Two workshops in Beirut and Tripoli have been implemented and reached respectively 48 and 64 health workers from the Primary health Care Network. Eight workshops are planned for the rest of the month of May 2007 across the country.
- International Medical Corps (IMC) conducted 10 vocational trainings in Community Development Centers in Toura, Rmeish, Majdel Selem, Tyr, and Khiam, on literacy, language skills, and woodcraft activities for handicapped children.

#### **World Health Organization**

<http://www.leb.emro.who.int/>

<http://www.virtualhic.org>