

Lebanon Crisis

Health Cluster Bulletin # 4

Friday 22 September 2006

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 is issued every Friday.



Child safe area in Tyre run by InterSOS with CCR and funded by UNICEF.

16 September 2006

Highlights

- WHO reports that the urgent needs for acute and chronic disease medications have been met and urges international donor agencies not to donate any more medicines unless shortage of specific drugs are clearly identified.
- One suspected case of rubella was reported this week and is still under investigation. The last week's case of Diphtheria was discarded due to wrong diagnosis and reporting while the three cases of whooping cough are still not confirmed and are subject to further investigations.
- Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs) still pose a major threat in the south of the country having an impact on the agricultural sector constituting 70% of the total household income.
- Post war psychosocial services need to be provided within the Primary Health Care setting, essential psychotropic medicines made available on regular basis and community institutions participate in the provision of mental health and psychosocial support.
- Water Safety & Quality Control need to be stressed especially that the rain season is approaching in order to avoid outbreaks of water borne diseases.
- Health cluster meetings in Beirut became focused on early recovery interventions meanwhile health clusters meeting in Tyre keep an operational approach.

Situation Overview

- WHO distribution of chronic drugs will stop reverting back to the before crisis system managed by MOH through an agreement with YMCA for distribution. Distribution system is based on an agreement with centers where centers provide number of patients served in the previous months or average consumption for chronic drugs. WHO Tyre Office will coordinate between request and donations of drugs between centers and donors.
- According to the National Demining Office (NDO), the number of casualty figures due to landmines/UXOs/cluster bombs is 10 deaths and 82 injuries, of which 1 children killed and 34 injured as of September 17, 2006.

- OCHA released a report entitled “A Lasting Legacy: The Deadly Impact of Cluster bombs in Southern Lebanon”. The report contains four maps showing the impact on agriculture and access to water of cluster bombs and describes the sheer amount of UXOs in south Lebanon.

Health Response to the Humanitarian Crisis

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

1. Assessment and monitoring

- The International Organization for Migration Psychosocial and Cultural Integration Unit (IOM PCI Unit) conducted a qualitative assessment using Rapid Appraisal Procedures to evaluate the main trends and issues in the psychosocial status of IDP and returnee communities in Lebanon. The first provisional results of the assessment in Nabatyeh and Baalbeck confirmed that the Lebanese population displaced internally and the returnees suffer from some war related stress factors. One of the recommendations is to respond in terms of services to the community and clinical needs of the population through an integrated approach covering geographical areas currently under-served.
- WHO and the Ministry of Public Health are conducting a health facilities damage assessment in the governorates of Mount Lebanon, North including Akkar and the part of Bekaa not covered yet. Data Entry is finalized and data analysis is in process.
- WHO water and sanitation engineer assessed 29 health facilities of the damaged and non functioning health facilities reported in WHO/MoPH assessment. determining their needs for Water and sanitation and structural rehabilitation The final report is expected by the 30th of September 2006.

2. Health coordination

- The health cluster at Tyre is organizing a special coordination meeting for partners working in the field of mental health and psychosocial support on Saturday 23 September 2006 at 12.00 p.m. in Tyre rest house. The purpose of the meeting is to develop a matrix of the activities done so far, the challenges faced and the needs identified, as well as to present the proposed national and training plan and the identification of possible areas for partners involvement.
- The responsibility for coordination of the Humanitarian response for the Early Recovery period will move from OCHA to UNDP on 29 September.
- The Health Cluster Matrix is regularly updated and disseminated to all health cluster partners in Tyre.
- The Tyre health cluster meetings will take place every Tuesday at 6:00 p.m., at WHO office within the Ministry of Health office.
- The Tyre water/sanitation cluster meetings will be held every Tuesday at 5:00 p.m.

3. Filling health gaps

- The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) supported by WHO and in collaboration with governors, Qaemmakam and municipalities is implementing this week rodents and insects spraying campaign of the debris and rubble of destroyed buildings in the Bekaa valley namely in Baalback, Teanayel, Chtaura, Ali El-Nahri, Bar Elias, and Taalbaya. The aim of the campaigns is to spray all the destroyed buildings with insecticides to kill rodents, insects, and fungi that live and multiply in these environmental conditions.
- Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) in collaboration with the Childhood Protection and Care Association (CPCA), Imam Al Sader and Makassed Primary

Health Care centers are providing pediatric Asthma care to children in the villages of the south through an Asthma specialized mobile clinics. The services provided are diagnosis following specific Spiro meter for children and distribution of related medications.

- YMCA as of the 12th of July 2006 provided 351 health dispensaries with chronic and non chronic medications. YMCA states that chronic medications are available in Lebanon in sufficient quantities.
- UNICEF will start providing booster and routine calendar Expanded Program of Immunization (EPI) in affected areas. UNICEF is distributing cold chain related equipment.
- InterSOS and CCR in collaboration with UNICEF started the Child Friendly Space activity in Tyre and Nabatyeh offering activities to children aged 5-13 years with the involvements of parents and communities. The activities aim to provide psychosocial support, awareness on mines' risks and hygiene.
- UNICEF provided a total of 48,000L of bottled water for the following villages: Dibbine Jlali, el Ghozlane, Khirbe Maissate, Majdel Silim, Marjayoun, Mhaibib, Nabi Youchaa and Qantara. UNICEF is preparing a plan to start fazing down the distribution of bottled water.
- American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) through its partners in Hasbaya, Marjeyoun, and Nabatieh, is providing more than 20,000 infant, toddler and mother's kits and holding awareness raising sessions to give guidance to mothers about caring for their infants and children.
- Mercy Corps started the repairs of 16 schools in Nabatiyeh and Marjeyoun Cazas as a first step of the plan presented and endorsed by the Ministry of Education to rehabilitate 41 public schools in Baalbek (8), Jezzine (3), Nabatiyeh (26), and Marjeyoun (4). The rehabilitation work will end prior to the beginning of the scholastic year. Mercy Corps continued the distribution of water to Marjeyoun delivering a total of 303 tanks.
- WHO warehouse sent 113 boxes of chronic essential medications to the Ministry of Public Health in order to be dispensed upon request in the MoPH pipeline.
- WHO distributed one supplementary New Emergency Health Kit (NEHK) to Meiss El Jebel Governmental Hospital and one basic box and one doctor's kit to Deir Amiss, Srifa, Kafra, Yaroun, Barasheet, Burj El Sheemaly. One NEHK provides essential drugs for 10,000 patients over a period of three months and one basic box provides essential drugs for 1,000 patients.
- WHO supplied two drums of chlorine (90 kg) which were provided to Oxfam to be used for sterilization of domestic water storage tanks in Bent Jbeil.
- UNDP is supporting the early recovery process through a grants' project that provides funding directly to municipalities to remove debris and fix damaged road. Grants were given to the municipalities of Nabatiyeh, Marjayoun, Bent Jbeil, Tyre and Baalbek and four municipalities in the southern suburbs of Beirut.
- WHO started the rehabilitation, based on the engineer structural assessment of Health facilities last week, of two health centers one in Srifa pertaining to an Non Governmental Organization (NGO) and one in Nakoura affiliated to the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA).

4. Preserving and supporting local health systems

- A joint statement by the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs, WHO, UNICEF, WFP and UNFPA has been signed for improving infant nutrition, proper substitution of breastfeeding, and training of NGOs on strategies to approach mothers. The interventions will also address improving the nutrition of pregnant women.
- WHO finalized a national plan on Mental Health and is proposing it for input from the partners at the mental health sub clusters in Tyre and Beirut. The plan includes trainings on emergency psychosocial assistance with a long term component for mental health program development in Lebanon.

- WHO epidemiologist conducted monitoring and evaluation visits to Rachaia, Tyre and Zahle, visiting the identified referral hospitals in these regions as well as 7 health units where on site training on the reporting format took place. Furthermore, a proposal on Strengthening Disease Surveillance and Outbreak Response in Lebanon was finalized and discussed with the Director General at the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH). So far, the first level training on Early Warning and Response Surveillance system (EWARS) of all districts covered 300 health units and dispensaries training 450 health professionals, identifying thirteen reference district governmental laboratories in the South and Bekaa to support in testing.

World Health Organization

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

<http://www.virtualhic.org>