

Lebanon Crisis

Health Cluster Bulletin # 33

Wednesday 24 October 2007

The Lebanon Crisis Health Cluster Bulletin aims to give an overview of the health activities conducted by the health cluster partners in relation to the latest Lebanon conflict as well as the crisis in the Palestinian camps. It compiles health information received from the different organizations working in the most affected areas.

The Health Cluster Bulletin will be issued every other Wednesday.



Picture: WHO

WHO, MoPH, MoAgr, and FAO "Brucellosis Prevention" Sessions in Nabatiyeh

18 October 2007

Highlights

- No major outbreak was reported through the Early Warning and Response System (EWARS).
- The situation in Lebanon remains uncertain and tense.

Nahr El-Bared Crisis

- The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) is leading the Humanitarian and Relief interventions in response to the Nahr El-Bared Crisis.
- Preparations for the return to Naher El-Bared continue.

Situation Overview

Nahr El-Bared Crisis

- Since 10 October 2007, around 350 Internally Displaced Refugee (IDR) families have returned to Naher El-Bared camp. The Norwegian Refugee Council, ACTED, and other NGOs are assessing the needs in terms of minor structural repairs to existing housing units in order to provide materials for IDRs.
- UNDP is working with UNRWA and Electricité du Liban (EDL) to set priorities and start the process of reconnecting the camp to the electricity network.
- IDRs are continuing to have shelters in only two governmental schools in Beddawi camp.

Health Response to the Humanitarian Crisis

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

1. Assessment and monitoring

- WHO Public Health focal point in Tyr visited 6 health centers in Bent Jbeil district aiming to improve surveillance data reporting.

Nahr El-Bared Crisis

- According to UNRWA, reports from Beddawi and Mina clinics as well as the mobile clinic showed no changes in the incidence of communicable diseases.

2. Health coordination

- The Health Cluster meeting for Southern Lebanon took place on 16 October 2007 and was attended by six partners. The next meeting is scheduled for 20 November 2007 at 15:00 p.m. at WHO office within the Ministry of Public Health premises-Tyr.
- The next Mental Health and Psychosocial Support sub-cluster is planned for 29 October 2007 at 12:00 p.m. at WHO office within the Ministry of Public Health premises-Tyr.
- The General Coordination Meeting took place on 19 October 2007 at the UN house-Tyr and was attended by all UN agencies in addition to partner Non Governmental Organizations. The next meeting will be held on 2 November 2007 at the same time and venue.
- The Health Cluster and Mental Health Matrices are regularly updated and shared with partners.

Nahr El-Bared Crisis

- The seventeenth Health Cluster meeting chaired by UNRWA took place at UNRWA Lebanon Field Office in Beirut and was attended by two partners. The next meeting is planned for 12 November 2007 at the same time and venue.
- UNRWA Area Health Coordinator is conducting home visits to in Nahr El Bared camp to elderly patients, nursing mothers, and newborn babies.

3. Filling health gaps

- Amel Association has conducted 3 awareness sessions in the South: the first session in Beflay, regarding Cardio Vascular Diseases; and two sessions in Beflay and Srifa, regarding Gynecological Diseases. The sessions reached respectively 25, 32, and 20 participants.
- INTERSOS has established a child friendly space project in Qana where children of the neighboring villages are enjoying several activities.

Nahr El-Bared Crisis

- UNRWA is setting up a health clinic in Nahr El Bared's sector C. Thus, the IDRs medical files are being moved from Beddawi to Nahr El Bared clinic.
- The Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) is providing ambulance services to the Nahr El Bared camp. PRCS is also setting up a prefabricated mobile clinic in the Nahr El Bared camp sector B.
- UNRWA, Islamic Relief, UNICEF, and ACTED are rehabilitating the water tanks and proceeding with filling the tanks, implementing water testing, and installing a water treatment plant for the river water. Solid waste bins and generators are also being moved to Nahr El Bared camp.
- UNRWA assistance to the IDRs is maintained through the provision of medical services at its clinics as well as contractual tertiary care hospitals. Shelters visits, maintenance, water pumping (2.500 cubic meters daily), and solid waste disposal (100 cubic meters daily) are still carried out.

- Health Care Society is maintaining the chronic drugs distribution until depletion of the stock. If no funds are available, the Society will end its activities in Beddawi camp.

4. Preserving and supporting local health systems

- WHO is implementing the field trainings on analytical methods using the portable testing laboratories as a follow up to the trainings on water analysis and water sampling techniques. Three field trainings were held in the MoPH Health Departments in Tyr, Marjeyoun, and Nabatieh, targeting the MoPH public health inspectors.
- WHO launched on 18 October 2007 a series of awareness sessions on Brucellosis Prevention in coordination with the MoPH, the Ministry of Agriculture, the FAO, and the municipalities. Two sessions have been conducted so far in Nabatiyeh and Tebnin, and were attended by 210 participants.
- WHO has resumed its postponed trainings on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies targeting paramedical staff at the level of Primary Health Care centers, conducting so far 2 trainings in Akkar and Baalbeck, and reaching 100 participants. Two more trainings are expected on the next week in Zahle and West Bekaa.
- WHO one-day workshops on "Hospital Emergency Preparedness planning" continues. Twelve workshops were implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), the Syndicate of Hospitals and the Lebanese Society of Emergency Medicine (LSEM) reaching 363 participants from 83 hospitals.

World Health Organization

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All inputs are welcome on: health@leb.emro.who.int