

Lebanon Crisis

Health Cluster Bulletin # 5

Friday 29 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.



Picture: UNFPA/Lebanon

One of the generators delivered by UNFPA to Najdeh Cha'bieh/ Nabatieh/ Hekamt El Ameen Hospital.

26 September 2006

Highlights

- WHO-EMRO Regional Committee's resolution on Lebanon crises states that the acute shortage of medical resources, supplies, services and facilities are impeding access of civilians to essential curative and preventive services. Furthermore WHO's full attention is required to the increase in ill health, in particular of mental disorders, and the economic burden this places on the health systems.
- Fifteen cases of diagnosed Hepatitis A, 80 cases of diarrhea and 35 cases of Scabies were reported from Siddiquine. Investigation is undertaken. Furthermore, report of increased number of diarrhea in Halta village is also under investigation.
- Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs) still pose a major threat in the south of the country having an impact on different dimensions of Lebanese population's life.
- Several NGOs are pulling out from South Lebanon, or are planning to leave in October.

Situation Overview

- Preliminary results from the Early Warning And Response System (EWARS) implementation in Tyre alone show the results from 23 reporting sites, revealing that most common conditions were common watery diarrhea and injuries. Report from Siddiquine village showed 80 cases of diarrhea and 35 cases of scabies, as well as an increased number of watery diarrhea in Halta village. Investigation is ongoing.
- According to the National Demining Office (NDO), the number of casualty figures due to landmines/UXOs/cluster bombs is 12 deaths and 98 injuries, of which 2 children killed and 39 injured as of September 28, 2006. According to the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre (UNMACC) there may be as many as one million unexploded cluster sub-munitions in South Lebanon .
- Oil spill clean up procedures are ongoing: the Ministry of Environment reports that it is currently cleaning only priority beaches that contain free flowing oil. On the other hand, Bahr Lobnan a Lebanese NGO cleaned 100 km of contaminated coastline, pulling approximately 70 tons of fuel from the seabed in the Jiyeh area and approximately 60 tons of fuel from underwater spots in Jbeil.
- According to national authorities and UNHCR, some 200,000 people remain displaced because of the level of destruction in their villages as well as the UXOs and cluster sub munitions present in their houses and hometowns.

- According to the Prime Minister's office, as of 27 September, out of 251 damaged villages in Lebanon, 99 of the most severely damaged ones have been adopted for reconstruction by various countries.

Health Response to the Humanitarian Crisis

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

1. Assessment and monitoring

- UNFPA in collaboration with Ministry of Public Health finalized the RH facilities assessment mainly in public hospitals, in affected areas. Eleven hospitals were assessed in terms of their needs for equipments, supplies, maternity services, operational capacity as well as damages incurred to maternity wards in the Bekaa, Southern Suburbs and the South. Preliminary results revealed that while some hospitals are operational others are in urgent need of RH equipments and generators. The final report will be ready by next week.
- WHO is supporting the Saint Joseph University in assessing health and educational facilities in Qana and surrounding villages.
- WHO assessed the health facilities in the Nakura, Hasbaya, Margeon, Bazoria, Aamel health center in Khiam. Assessment covered the situation with regards to the provision of PHC and RH services, overall level of functionality, shortage/needs and WatSan situation.
- WHO assessed both Margeon and Hasbaya governmental hospital, both hospitals are functioning.
- WHO assessed 50 health facilities in South Lebanon on provision of Primary Health Care and Reproductive Health services, overall level of functionality, Water and Sanitation and structural rehabilitation. Ten facilities have been identified as damaged or non-functional facilities and are in urgent need of rehabilitation. Already 2 intervention activities have been initiated at the Naqura and Srifa health centers.
- UN Environmental Program (UNEP) will soon undertake an assessment of key environmental hazards in Lebanon including: waste rubble, medical waste, industrial waste, coastal marine pollution, asbestos, ground water contamination and ammunition, including depleted uranium weapons.

2. Health coordination

- Humedica pull out from Lebanon last week and MDM emergency team is leaving on 12th of October 2006.
- The weekly health cluster meeting in Tyre was attended by 11 health partners. A mental health and psychosocial support meeting was conducted in Tyre with participation of 9 partners.
- The responsibility for coordination of the Humanitarian response for the Early Recovery period will move from OCHA to UNDP on 29 September.
- WHO in coordination with UNICEF and the Ministry of Public Health organized several preparatory meetings in Tyre and Beirut for partners interested in Expanded Program of Immunization (EPI) to revitalize the EPI system and to start Immunization outreach activities. A plan is being finalized to undertake a polio campaign all over Lebanon in addition to an awareness raising campaign on measles.
- 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 5:00 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

- UNFPA delivered two generators (550 KVA each) for each of the Nabatieh Public hospital and the Najdeh Shaabieh-Nabatieh hospital (Hekmat El Ameen). Both hospitals have a very high turnover of delivery and cater for patients from the entire South area.
- UNFPA is finalizing the development of four information leaflets on post-partum depression, oral contraceptives, yeast infections and nutrition during pregnancy to be pasted on the RH medication boxes provided by UNFPA to meet NGOs needs.
- WHO donated water tanks with capacity of 2000 liter to the PHC in Kafr Haman, Mimes and Khaloat.
- WHO provided one doctors kit for each of the PHC in Naqura, Bazoria, Srifa, Deer Aames, Kafra, Yaroun, Burj Shemaly, Baraasheet, Rumeesh and Hasbaya health centers.
- UNICEF has deployed 4 mobile water treatment units, of which 2 have been installed in Houla and Markaba villages.
- WFP is continuing its second round of food distribution and provides a 21 day ration to 220,000 beneficiaries. The third round will start early October and finish by the middle of the month.
- UNICEF provided over 150,000 liters of bottled water to various regions in the districts of Tyre, Bent Jbeil and Nabatyieh. Furthermore, UNICEF distributed 9.500 Adult Hygiene Kits to NGOs partners and to municipalities in the districts of Tyre, Marjeoun, Bent Jbeil and Nabatyieh as well as 10.000 Baby Hygiene kits to municipalities in Tyre, Bent Jbeil and Nabatyieh district.
- WHO provided Margeon and Hasbaya governmental hospitals with one New Emergency Health Kit (NEHK) each. One NEHK provides essential drugs for 10,000 patients over a period of three months.
- IMC is running 14 mobile clinics covering Aljmayjmeh, Yatar, Kafarkela, and Adshete.
- The Qatar Red Crescent (QRC) rehabilitated the third floor at Saida governmental hospital as well as the Red Cross center in Bent Jbeil. Furthermore, the QRC delivered health care to 4.063 patients through the 5 outpatients clinics in Saida governmental hospital and the mobile clinic. The mobile clinic in Bent jbeil is covering the villages of Yareine, Marwaheine, Kafra, Alboustan, um altout and many others.

4. Preserving and supporting local health systems

- The Mine Risk Education team at the University of Balamand-Faculty of Health Sciences- organized Training of Trainers sessions reaching 423 members of various NGOs and institutions in Nabatiyeh, Tyre, Ibl El Saki, West Bekaa and other villages in the south. Furthermore, the team conducted awareness sessions attaining 1.200 children aged 5 to 15 years in children's camps in Jezzine and Tebnin.
- WHO provided water quality standard as well as guidelines for proper usage of chlorine for the disinfection of drinking water and water storage tanks and tankers to all WATSAN cluster members working on this issue in the affected areas.
- The WHO Early Warning and Response Surveillance system (EWARS) follow up meeting was attended by 25 representatives from the trained health facilities in Tyre and its surroundings. The meeting provided feedback on the overall progress of the EWARS, stressed the importance of accurate data collection and reporting according to the EWARS surveillance form and WHO case definition as well as introduced the standard registry of patients.

World Health Organization

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

<http://www.virtualhic.org>