

## Lebanon Crisis

### Health Cluster Bulletin # 2

Friday 8 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: WHO/Lebanon

The weekly Health cluster meeting in Tyre gathering 15 United Nations agencies, International Organizations, International and National Non Governmental Organizations and local authorities.  
5 September 2006

#### Highlights

- WHO reports that the urgent needs for acute and chronic disease medication have been met and urges international donor agencies not to donate any more medicines unless shortage of specific drugs are clearly identified.
- No outbreaks of diseases have been reported to the Ministry of Public Health.
- Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs) still pose a major threat in the south of the country leading to restrictions in movement.
- Post war psychosocial services need to be carefully coordinated.
- Health cluster meetings in Beirut became focused on early recovery interventions meanwhile health clusters meeting in Tyre keep an operational approach.

#### Situation Overview

- There is a general consensus among various partner organizations that there is no more need to donate essential drugs to Lebanon. According to various assessments, drugs are available and stocks are adequate. WHO urges donor agencies not to send any more drug donations. This is also to avoid risks of over prescription and to avoid environmental health problems in the disposal.
- According to the National Demining Office (NDO), the number of casualty figures due to landmines/UXOs/cluster bombs is 13 deaths and 63 injuries, of which 2 children killed and 20 injured as of September 9, 2006.
- A total of 10 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Teams are now operating in Lebanon, from the United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre (MACC), the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the Lebanese Army. To date, 434 cluster bomb strike locations have been identified and 112 unexploded bombs and 13,871 cluster sub-munitions destroyed. The unexploded clusters affecting large areas such as homes and farmland will stay for months and possibly years causing every day, people mutilation, injuries and death.

- Psychosocial services are being delivered and supported by partners such as Save the Children Federation-United Kingdom, Terre Des Hommes, UNHCR, International Office of Migration and Tyre district office.

## Health Response to the Humanitarian Crisis

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

### 1. Assessment and monitoring

- Interagency joint assessment mission organized by OCHA to Kafr Chouba, where 80 dwellings had been destroyed, 150 moderately damaged and 450 lightly damaged. WHO reports that the health center is functioning and providing PHC services. Electrical power supply is available and people have access to safe water supply. The municipality requested 150 household water tanks to replace the damaged ones.
- Although no disease outbreaks have been reported so far, the large scale damage to water and sewage networks does remain a major concern. WHO conducted case investigation into an increased number of diarrhea cases in Yanouh village (south of Tyre) and reports the situation is under control with the number of cases decreasing. Results of the water test were negative and residual chlorine in the area was sufficient, at 0.4 ppm. As a preventative measure, the water station providing drinking water to Yanouh was provided with 200 kilograms of chlorine (Wadi Gilo)
- UNHCR assessed 26 municipalities in the area of Nabatieh, and an additional 14 villages around Tyre, identifying key issues such as the widespread presence of unexploded ordnances (UXOs), particularly cluster munitions; lack of access to clean drinking water and electricity; lack of access to medicine for chronic diseases, from which an estimated 25% of the population suffers; and acute psychological impact and distress, particularly for children.
- The preliminary report of the service delivery or health facility damage assessment organized by Ministry of Public Health and WHO is available online at: [http://www.who.int/hac/crises/international/middle\\_east/Lebanon\\_Crisis\\_Service\\_Availability\\_Assessment\\_29Aug06.pdf](http://www.who.int/hac/crises/international/middle_east/Lebanon_Crisis_Service_Availability_Assessment_29Aug06.pdf)
- WHO conducted a comprehensive assessment of the main public health laboratories in Baabda (Beirut), Hasbaya, Saida and Baalbeck. Preliminary results show that both public and private hospitals have trained staff and are well equipped for rapid testing for disease confirmation. However, there is still a need for consumables and reagents.
- WHO started a water and sanitation assessment in health facilities.
- The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) at the University of Balamand (UOB) is finalizing a needs assessment of elderly (over 65 years) in the district of Nabatieh, with respect to psychosocial support and outreach health services in rural areas. Health education material on elderly needs in relation to hygiene, nutrition and mental well-being will be distributed during data collection.
- The Landmines Resource Centre (LMRC) at the FHS-UOB is partnering on a study of victims of cluster bombs.

### 2. Health coordination

- A special health coordination meeting was held in Tyre for health partners with mobile clinics activities. All the partners agreed on the criteria were the mobile clinics have to work, locations (villages) and the package of health services to be provided starting with consultation and treatment, health education and Immunization according to the Ministry of Public Health and criteria of national Expanded Program of Immunization (EPI) in Lebanon. Next meeting will be on Monday to finalize mobile clinics distribution in Marjayoun and Bent Jbeil.

- 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.
- An updated contact list for UN Humanitarian Cluster Leads is available on [www.virtualhic.org](http://www.virtualhic.org).
- The Humanitarian Information Centre (HIC) is providing a range of information designed to avoid duplication of resources and to promote complimentary activities among humanitarian service providers. Recently, HIC produced a map based on the last 3 weeks assessments showing the numbers of destroyed and damaged homes, in addition to maps detailing the distribution of relief items by UN agencies and NGOs. HIC in Tyre plot a map with the Health facilities assessment results available to all partners.

### 3. Filling health gaps

- Save the Children (SCF) is supporting 6 Imam Sadr Foundation health clinics in Saddiqine, Aita Al Chaab, Derdghaya, El Hanniye (Jal Bahr), Deir Siriane, and Shehabyeh in the provision of free health care in Southern Lebanon. Medical supplies and hygiene kits to reach approximately 30,915 people were provided.
- SCF is organizing trainings about infant feeding issues particularly in emergencies to volunteers and health workers in clinics and NGOs. 1,800 leaflets for mothers and 800 leaflets for health workers have been distributed, in addition to guidelines about the safe use of infant formula in necessary cases. 500 cups will be made available at the clinics so as to encourage mothers using formula feeding to do so with cups. Breastfeeding is promoted as the preferred method of infant feeding especially during emergencies. For copies of the leaflets in English and Arabic, contact: [alimaclaime@btinternet.com](mailto:alimaclaime@btinternet.com)
- UNFPA is still making available and distributing hygiene and baby kits. Additional 3000 hygiene kits and 250 baby kits were provided to 2 NGOs for distribution in the South, mainly Nabatieh and Marjeoun and to the Southern Suburbs consecutively.
- UNFPA provided the Southern Suburbs of Beirut with essential drugs and supplies to help address the urgent reproductive health needs of 40,000 women.
- WHO will be providing reagents and other laboratory supplies to be distributed to 13 public health laboratories that have been identified as the national and district reference laboratories. This will include the Rafic Hariri University Hospital in Beirut.
- WHO dispatched one complete Trauma kit A and B to Rachaya hospital and one Basic kit and one doctor kit to El Bazouriya HC. One trauma kit provides disposables, medical and surgical supplies and equipment for 100 operations..
- WHO provided around 5,000 kilograms of chlorine to water authorities of the south, Bekaa and Beirut and Mount Lebanon.
- WHO is in the process of purchasing 4400 rapid water testing kits to be distributed to NGOs and other institutions in the districts of Tyre, Marjayoun, Bent Jbeil, Nabatieh and Hasbayiah, in addition to Southern Suburbs of Beirut and Bekaa.
- Mercy Corps continued to deliver drinking water and food rations to villages in Nabatieh and Marjayoun districts, supplying 13,500 liters of bottled drinking water and food rations for 12,680 beneficiaries in 14 villages in Nabatieh and Marjayoun districts. In Baalbek, Mercy Corps completed the installation of a second water pump that will provide water for approximately 2000 households in the city of Baalbek.
- Islamic Relief has served over 130,000 people in Lebanon so far. In the past week, Islamic Relief distributed 10 water bladders with a capacity of 5000 litre each to 10 villages in southern Lebanon, focusing on the most affected areas along the border, totaling 35 water bladders in Nabatieh and southern Tyre. Islamic Relief also donated a 120 kVA generator to pump water for over 2000 people in Hanine, a rural village of Bent Jbeil Caza, which has been without electricity and running water. As there are still pockets of food insecurity, Islamic Relief delivered food packages to 1200 families in Bekaa Valley.

- ICRC has delivered a 1 MWA generator to Siddiqine and 200 KvA units to Aytaroun and Ayta Al Sha'b.
- IMC delivered 82 water tanks and one New Emergency Health Kit to Jmajime in Bent Jbeil and initiated a water distribution program in Safad el Battikh. IMC also dispatched a total of 902 hygiene kits to Yater and Kfar Kila in Marjayoun.
- WHO will provide the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), the water authorities in the South, the Ministry of Water and energy and the Beirut Governmental Hospital with 10 portable water testing laboratories enabling the measure of a large number of parameters.
- UNICEF donated 8 Safe Play Kits to IMC for their mental Health activities with affected children.
- UNICEF provided Markaba village with a 45,000 liters tank, to be used as a central tank, and purification machine to support the village with potable water. UNICEF will provide Srifa with a 45,000L water tank.
- DPNA in collaboration with Catholic Relief Service (CRS) and UNHCR organized in Jezzine, a summer camp for children aged 9 to 16 years coming from four war-ravaged villages in southern Lebanon. UNHCR provided tents, mattresses, blankets and kitchen sets from emergency supplies brought in for victims of the war. Conflict resolution, peace building and mine awareness session were activities other than leisure ones. UNHCR acknowledges the importance of addressing the psychological impact of war on children.
- WHO and the ministry of Public Health launched a health facilities damage assessment in the governorates of Mount Lebanon, North including Akkar and the part of Bekka not covered yet. 33 trained university students will be collecting data from 597 health facilities in all the districts in these governorates.
- The Resource Centre for Relief and Development at the UOB, in partnership with the St. George Hospital and the International Orthodox Christian Charities, distributed medical supplies to the governmental hospitals in Hasbaya, Marjaayoun, Nabatieh, Tyre and Sidon.
- Humedica is providing health services through its two mobile clinics in the villages of Qlaily, Ainata, Mjdel Zoun, El Mansori, Rechckananay, Srifa, Kafra, Beit Lif and Blida.

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

- WHO Epidemiology expert trained this week approximately 200 doctors, nurses and other health workers on disease surveillance and outbreak investigation in Dahia (South Beirut), Baalbeck (East Lebanon), Hasbaya (south Lebanon) and Saida (South Lebanon) . The goal is to implement the Early Warning and Response Surveillance system (EWARS) in all of the affected areas.
- WHO and UNFPA in collaboration with the MoPH are developing a training course in Reproductive Health in emergencies addressed to doctors, midwives and nurses. This is in line with the needs identified during the emergency situation as reported by hospitals and PHC in Southern suburbs and Tyre undertaken the latest field visits by WHO. Further assessment of other districts in the south and other regions is planned before the finalization of the training course.
- The LMRC at the FHS-UOB, in coordination with the NDO and the National MRE Committee, will be conducting from the 9th until the 21st, 2006, a series of six sessions on capacity building and awareness workshops in Mine Risk Education (MRE) in the South. Meanwhile, the LMRC continues to hold community MRE interventions and to update its database of mine victims in Lebanon.

#### World Health Organization

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

<http://www.virtualhic.org>