

## **EDUCATION CLUSTER SITREP**

*Thursday 25 September 2008*

### **1. Needs Assessments and Analysis**

- The Disaster Preparedness and Response Education (DPRE) working group met for the third time on 16 September, chaired by UNESCO and with representation from the Ministry of Education. The group is focusing on two main activity areas: preparation of an advocacy strategy for implementation of DPRE as a priority in all schools nationwide; and production of a DPRE resource pack of materials for distribution to all schools in cyclone-affected areas. Resource pack materials fall within five elements: risk assessment and assessing individual capacity; response plans; drills and practices; materials that can be adapted and used; disaster recovery and support. In addition, UNICEF convened an Education Discussion meeting on 18 September with DPRE as its theme.

### **2. Overall Achievements and Response**

- Cluster partners are providing material support to over 2,500 schools in 21 affected townships.
- 1,173 damaged schools have been repaired to be able to re-open with minimal delay.
- Where schools were completely destroyed, 1,214 temporary safe learning spaces are being established to allow learning to continue. Of these, 70% have been completed and are operating.
- 1,245 schools have received replacement furniture including desks, chairs and blackboards, and large amounts of school furniture are still in the delivery pipeline (UNICEF, Save the Children and Islamic Relief).
- 1,259 school kits have been provided, as have 639 schools-in-a-box to benefit up to 51,000 children, and 736 games kits. 277,800 children have received packages of essential learning materials and 3,652 teacher's kits have been distributed.
- 362,800 textbooks (including life-skills books) have been reprinted and to date 212,400 have been delivered to 1,185 basic education schools.
- Over 14,000 copies of the UNICEF handbook "Tips for Teachers", on how to provide psychological support to children are being distributed to teachers in affected areas.
- Support is also being provided to younger children, through supplies to 266 Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) centres, including materials designed to help provide psychosocial support after Nargis.
- UNICEF technical architect plans for Built Back Better safer and more child-friendly schools are nearing completion for final approval.

### **3. Challenges**

- As it will be impossible to rebuild all collapsed schools during the coming dry season, many of the temporary safe learning spaces that have been erected may have to serve for up to two years or more. Certain components, such as tarpaulin roofing, might not last so long and maintenance of these structures needs to be ensured, and discussed with responsible agencies, local committees and government.

### **4. Gaps and Future Planning**

- Some gaps are emerging in support for schools in southern townships of Yangon division, including in provision of school furniture and materials.
- The Cluster prioritised and agreed six objectives to be included in a Cluster plan of action for the period September to December 2008, and proposed activities within the timeframe. The six agreed objectives are to: Identify gaps in the emergency education response; Support and develop DPRE; Build schools back better, safer and more child friendly; Strengthen intercluster cooperation and coordination; Strengthen coordination and communication with Government partners; Strengthen cluster approach at field level through OCHA hubs.
- As the number of agencies interested in reconstruction increases, Cluster partners agree on the need to look at schools as more than just buildings, and raise awareness

of the need for safe and child-friendly places for children to learn. While building designs are being developed, the cluster is drafting a set of minimum requirements for schools, which include elements such as adequate space, light, ventilation, noise levels, water and sanitation, waste disposal, play areas, library, safe entrances and exits and access to the school compound, and spaces for teachers. Commitments for building schools should be accompanied by a commitment to provide furniture, either from the same agency or through partnerships. Provision for regular maintenance by a responsible party should be built-in on handover.

- On 16 September, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Rehabilitation finalised and released guidelines and procedures for authorisation to reconstruct schools. These have been posted to the Myanmar HIC website Education Cluster page.

Cluster Co-Leads:

Marc Wetz (UNICEF)

Shirley Long (Save the Children)

IM Focal Point:

[mwetz@unicef.org](mailto:mwetz@unicef.org)

[shirlong2000@gmail.com](mailto:shirlong2000@gmail.com)

[IMEduCluster@gmail.com](mailto:IMEduCluster@gmail.com)